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Chauvet VUE LEDs

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Mobile Beat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE

ISSUE 109 SEPTEMBER 2007

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WINNING OVER SCHOOL STAFF AND STUDENTS

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MAKING THE GRADE

Welcome to the first day of school! OK, not really, but for many DJs who jump into the exciting youth event market, it can feel like that first day back that most of us experienced every autumn for the first few decades of our lives: a mixture of fear (or at least insecurity) and excitement.

This issue is aimed at making that first day easier for those who have not tried the school / kids' party thing yet, and also at providing ideas for those who have done so to improve their marketing efforts, performances and many other areas. I won't give all answers away...go ahead and crack this MB open and start studying!

Serious Business

I'd like to break with tradition for a moment and use this space to give you a heads-up on our next power-packed issue, coming up in November (MB 110). It will be covering ways to sharpen up your business skills, looking at your company from a variety of angles, such as marketing, day-to-day procedures, using modern technology, and much more. One special highlight will be a feature on how to connect your entertainment business with those big companies that need you to help them have fun at their corporate events.

Even more electrifying is an interview,

conducted by our Publisher and President, Ryan Burger, with Jay Levinson. Levinson is the originator of "Guerilla Marketing"—the pursuit of alternate marketing methods to give smaller businesses a powerful weapon in the fight for customers. Many DJ companies have been using his techniques for years, and now, the business guru talks specifically about how entertainers can implement his ideas. And, best of all, after reading what Levinson has to say in print, you also have a great opportunity to learn from him in person when he keynotes at our next Mobile Beat show in Las Vegas, next February. Don't miss out! (You'll find info on MBLV08 on page 23.)

Finally, issue 110 will be a MEGA-issue, featuring extended sections with info on the upcoming Vegas show, along with all the great business-building info. It will also be going out to readers beyond our regular subscriber base, so if you have a product or service you want to advertise, this is definitely an opportunity for exposure that you *cannot* afford to neglect. Contact National Advertising Director Andy "Cubbie" Powell about how to get in on the action: (515) 986-3300 x304 or apowell@mobilebeat.com.

Dan Walsh, Editor in Chief



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ADJA BOOSTS ALL STARS

The ADJA will establish a greater positive presence at the upcoming 12th Annual Mobile Beat DJ Show & Conference in Las Vegas, by co-sponsoring the popular DJ All Star Show, this year featuring Freedom Williams (C & C Music Factory) and Tone Loc. This sponsorship, in addition to their representation at the conference trade show and the annual association "national meeting," will serve as a positive affirmation of the ADJA's commitment to support the major events that move the mobile DJ industry forward.

For the past several years, the ADJA has continually increased its involvement at the Mobile Beat DJ Show and Conference in Las Vegas—the nation's most prominent industry event for mobile DJs. This year the ADJA has again stepped up to the plate to co-sponsor the highly anticipated DJ All Star Show.



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION MERGER

Dennis E. Hampson, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Online Disc Jockey Association Inc. (CODJA) and Jim Griffin, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Association of Mobile Entertainers and Operators (CAMEO) announced in July the merger of these two professional DJ associations. The merger includes both the CAMEO National office and their CAMEO regional operations in Ontario with CODJA.

CODJA is currently Canada's largest national professional DJ association with close to 900 DJ service members across Canada representing over 2,000 DJs. CAMEO is a national professional DJ association with chaptered members in Ontario and independent members in Western Canada. The merger will provide a wider range of national benefits and expanded programs to CAMEO members.

The newly merged association will be operated under the management of CODJA. CODJA Chairman Dennis Hampson will be added to the Board of Directors of CAMEO and take management control of CAMEO immediately. Jim Griffin has appointed three of CAMEO's management team to supervise this transition and the wind down of CAMEO over the next two months. CAMEO will continue to operate under the CAMEO name until September 30th and current memberships will continue until the end of the year.

"I am delighted to have these talented and devoted CAMEO executives and members as part of the CODJA team now and to once again be working with my long time friend and former CDJA colleague and VP Jim Griffin," says CODJA CEO and President Dennis Hampson. "The market and technologies of our industry are changing, and we have to change with them. We are going to build a better DJ association together," he adds.

"I am pleased to give our members the benefit of CODJA's excellent leadership and benefits through this merger," says Jim Griffin, CAMEO Chairman. "It will be great to be working with my former association and trade show partner and good friend Dennis Hampson



again and I am pleased to be a part of the newly expanded CODJA management team. I know that along with the whole CODJA team we will take this association to the next level and beyond in the industry."

MORE SPACE UP NORTH

Northern Light FX recently broke ground on a new warehouse to be added to their campus in Bemidji, Minnesota. This warehouse will increase available on-hand inventory and decrease fulfillment time. Warehouse Supervisor Rick Wike said, "We're very excited about the new facility. Anyone who's been to our existing facility could tell you that we're cramped for space so to add a building of this size is great." Wike added, "It has some really nice features for efficiency too. Product will be more verticalized with taller pallet racking and a tandem of forklifts will ensure smooth flow from the in docks to the out docks. Smaller products will be conveyable and the picking line will move dramatically faster." The facility will feature 4 docks and a larger staging yard for freight carriers.

Northern Light FX Marketing Director, Kat Carrlson, commented on the impact this should have for customers, "What this really boils down to is a lot more inventory and the ability to get it to our customers faster and for less. That's always a good thing. It also frees up space for other functions in the existing buildings. Plans include a larger customer service call / response center to better assist our customers, and an increased tech area for our install team".

DJ WIKI UNLEASHED

ProDJ Publishing has launched a very extensive project for the industry...that will never be completed! The DJWiki—The DJ-Built Encyclopedia—is being built by the community at Start.ProDJ.Com and is tied into the various resources related to ProDJ.Com—The Internet's Source For DJs.

"There are dozens of books about and within the DJ industry; dozens of videos/DVDs; and tons more resources through the various national magazines, national and regional conferences, and associations," says Ryan Burger of ProDJ.Com. "This

is one thing the entire industry can work toward building together. The Wiki system allows any user who registers to make edits to the soon-to-be extensive and alwaysgrowing DJ encyclopedia."

From Wikipedia's description of itself: "A wiki is a website that allows visitors to add, remove, and edit content...Wikis allow for linking among any number of pages. This ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for mass collaborative authoring...Proponents rely on their community of users who can catch malicious content and correct it."

"DJ Wiki will be an awesome way to collect and categorize information for DJs. It will change the way that information is stored and searched, and will provide anyone with specific relevant information at their fingertips. DJ Wiki will be supervised to assure accurate information flows from it. The community process that exists will hone the content to a razor's edge," says DJ Dr. Drax, ADJA National President and dj technology innovator.

In addition to the site's extensive educational content, it will also have directories of links, manufacturers, dealers, and other industry members. But in the end, the DJ Wiki will generally go in the direction that the industry and its users want it to go. While there will be editors and staff watching over it and helping to mold it, it will grow only with the help of every DJ who wants to help. DJWiki can be accessed at <http://start.prodj.com>.

STANTON GAINS SEIDEN

The Stanton Group, a leading audio equipment company operating Stanton Magnetics, Cerwin Vega!, and KRK Systems, is proud to announce the addition of Barry Seiden as National Sales Manager for Stanton DJ and Cerwin Vega Pro. Prior to joining the Stanton Group, Barry Seiden served as Sales Manager for a number of MI companies, such as Numark, Gemini and Gem Sound. Most recently, Barry founded Metro Tek, a manufacturer representative firm specializing in Pro Audio, Lighting and Video Equipment.

"With close to 30 years of industry sales experience, Barry possesses the knowledge and knowhow that will make a real difference on the Stanton DJ and Cerwin Vega sales team," says Bryan Pistone, Stanton Group VP of sales.

The company also announced that Jim Moore will be taking a new position at the company where he will be supporting Stanton



Continued on page 75

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VocoPro Woos VJs

VocoPro is now making a name for itself among VJs with their release of the **KJ-7808RV**. This **7-channel mixer** combines full mixing capabilities, professional DSP vocal reverb and automatic video switching in an easy-to-mount casing. The KJ-7808RV contains 4 microphone channels, each with Bass, Treble, Gain, DSP effect level controls and a volume slider, as well as combo XLR / 1/4" mic input jacks for increased flexibility. This versatile mixer has 3 RCA A/V input channels plus 6 more audio-only stereo RCA input channels. You can either switch between channels manually or assign up to two channels to the crossfader for quick audio switching. The crossfader also acts as an automatic video

mixer, switching video channels along with the audio channels. Its two RCA video outputs and a third RCA monitor output give you more video capabilities than ever before.

– www.vocopro.com

Mini Dancer II Takes the Stage

Musicorp, a leading distributor and manufacturer of musical instruments, lighting products and accessories, introduces the newest addition to the **MBT Lighting & Sound** product line, the new **Mini Dancer II effect light**. It projects a colorful sound-active effect perfect for mobile DJs who want to add movement and color to a dance floor or stage. 16 colored lenses combine with two 50 watt lamps to produce 32 bright beams that twist and turn to the beat of music. The Mini Dancer II's compact size (12"W x 13"D x 8"H) and light weight (7 lbs.) make it attractive to entertainers on the move. And because of the low-heat 50 watt lamps and efficient cooling fan, they can let the Mini Dancer II run through the entire performance if necessary without cool-down hassles. The Mini Dancer II includes an audio sensitivity adjustment knob, hanging bracket, and power cord plus a bonus set of lamps.

– www.mbtlighting.com



Continued on page 76

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Beat Generation

Although primarily meant for video artists to create soundtrack music for their productions, Abaltat Beat is a Mac software application that might also help DJs and VJs create their own exciting beats. First, it functions as a beat calculator, allowing the user to calculate the optimum beats-per-minute (BPM) for an edited picture sequence. This is done by analyzing the Edit Decision List (EDL). Abaltat Beat then suggests a series of possible fits, all of which can be listened to. The favored BPM rate can then be used to search a music library or for input into other Abaltat music-creation software.

Second, it functions as a rhythm machine. By selecting a suggested BPM and selecting a time signature and drum pattern (included with the application), a drum track is created that is in sync with the picture. The user can then listen to the result and export it as audio (AIFF), QuickTime (with picture), and Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI) files. All of Abaltat's products come bundled with many sample files. Demos of the product can be viewed on the Web site www.abaltat.com.

Don't Blow Your Stack

Newer Technology, Inc. (NewerTech - www.newertech.com), a leading developer of PC and Mac performance upgrades and accessories, announced the newest addition to its award-winning storage solution line: the miniStack® v3 'Quad Interface' powered hub storage solution with up to 1.0TB (1,000GB) of storage capacity. It is designed for Plug n' Play ease of use with any Mac or PC with an available FireWire 800/400, USB 2.0, or eSATA port.



With an ergonomically unique rear and side port configuration of one eSATA, two FireWire 800, one FireWire 400, and three USB 2.0 ports, miniStack v3 lets users connect multiple digital accessories like scanners, printers, memory card readers, digital cameras, and MP3 players simultaneously and without clutter. Its port flexibility and compact design also makes miniStack v3 an ideal portable external hard drive storage solution.

miniStack v3 is ideal for data intensive uses like storing and accessing large MP3 libraries, audio/video editing, digital photography, and as a high-speed back. It utilizes the latest generation Oxford 924 bridge chipset, the fastest drive mechanisms available, and an eSATA port to deliver the fastest single drive data transfer rates possible...up to 150 MB per second. With storage capacity up to 1.0TB, users can store up to 350,000 MP3 songs or 1 million JPEG photos, for example. miniStack v3 is available in seven pre-configured 7200RPM solutions, from 160GB to 1.0TB, priced starting at \$169.99 MSRP from NewerTech's exclusive distributor, Other World Computing, at www.macsales.com, as well as through retail. channel. For more information, see www.newertech.com/products/ministackv3.php.

Reach Out and Text Someone

By Mike Thomas

Leveraging essential youth technology for entertainment's sake

As DJs, we live and die by how well we engage and interact with the audience. My company, Higher Level Sound, has found a great way to grab the audience, and with it, gain a competitive advantage. We now use text messaging services at any type of event we produce, from nightclubs and bars, to school events and proms, to large-scale concerts and tours--and audiences are eating it up. If you are not actively looking to integrate text messaging into your performance then you're not only missing out on an added revenue stream, but you're also not in sync with social trends, especially among teens and young adults.

The latest texting technology provides DJs with compelling and interactive tools proven to entertain crowds for hours on end. More importantly, it helps you gather essential information for future promotional and marketing opportunities. Having this tool in our entertainment arsenal has been a key to our company winning new business and has a high-perceived value among customers.

Do Your Homework

Before you run out and purchase any text messaging software blindly, you should evaluate your company's needs and research the different options that are available. For instance, if you're looking for an easy way to simply correspond with patrons for marketing or promotional means, then a text messaging service provider is probably your best option. You can sit back and let them do all the heavy lifting, but be aware that it's pay-per-use and the cost of licensing fees or using those outside services add up quickly.

In looking for a more creative option, we found an exceptional "do it all" system called Interactive Messaging Unlimited (IMU). IMU, created by Pangolin, is PC software that allows text or picture messages from cell phones, Blackberrys(R), and other wireless devices to be displayed immediately on video screens, including projection video and laser systems, broadcast and cable TV, and web pages. Aside from its professional display capabilities, this



system not only receives messages, but also can send messages. In addition, it has simple tools for creating and using mobile marketing address books making it the most versatile application on the market.

"Until recently, text-messaging was in its infancy stage here in the US, but in the past two years it has been gaining steam," says William Benner Jr., president of Pangolin. "We designed this system based on requests from overseas Pangolin software users who were looking to incorporate text messaging services into their productions. We then evolved the system to enhance the entertainment experience and also emphasize the visual display ability, all in a user-friendly package with unlimited potential for the user."

On the Big Screen

By far, our most popular way to engage any crowd with the IMU system is by creating virtual or live "chats" for crowds to mingle and flirt visually via TV monitors, projection video, or other video displays. Throughout the event, patrons send text and picture messages for display to a specified phone number. A moderator can control which messages are displayed, filter message content as needed, decide on their order, as well as duration on screen. DJs can also utilize automatic filters to monitor content of all incoming messages. These live chats can be displayed simultaneously alongside other content, including live footage from the event as well as sponsor's ads, without overlapping or interfering with on-going chats.

Requests by Text

Our DJs simplify their job by using IMU to handle song and video requests from the crowd, rather than have them rush to the DJ booth in swarms. Operating much like a traditional jukebox, DJs can designate alphanumeric codes to a playlist of songs and music videos for the audience to choose from. Audience members can then use those alphanumeric codes to text their requests to the designated number displayed, allowing the text message to act as a "virtual quarter." Once the DJ receives the requests, he can have them queued up and ready for broadcast to keep the crowd dancing all night.

The latest texting technology provides DJs with compelling and interactive tools proven to entertain crowds for hours on end.

Rock the Vote

We've found that a great way to keep the audience's attention is to run contests, polls, and other interactive games by using the system's built-in voting features, which displays results in real-time. One contest we run frequently that generates a great crowd response is our American Idol-style karaoke competition. Audience members participate as contestants and select a desired song to perform. Each contestant is designated a specific numeric code for voting purposes. After all contestants have performed, remaining audience members can text in their vote of their favorite vocalist and votes are tallied



and displayed for all to see. As an added incentive, you can award top contestants with prizes for participating.

Varieties of Eye Candy

The software also provides tools for quickly creating professional looking video backgrounds and multi-paneled display screens where elements such as scrolling text, streaming video, live feeds, and static or animated graphics can all run simultaneously without difficulty.

The IMU system is not limited to conventional video display methods. For larger events, IMU can be used in conjunction with laser systems, interfacing typical laser beams with SMS text messaging for infinite scalability. Needless to say, integrating the IMU system with other visual effects can make an event truly unique and is sure to leave a lasting impression on the crowd.

New Marketing Magic

Let's face it: Entertainment benefits aside, what really matters to your company is its bottom line. By offering text messaging services along with your DJ/MC services, you've gained a competitive advantage over other DJs.

Since display screens are completely customizable, you can boost revenue by selling advertising space for display during on-screen chats or contests. Viewers are naturally drawn into the ever-changing chat screen--and at the same time they're taking in advertisers' messages.

For direct marketing, we use the system's instant database features, which stores cell phone information of all incoming messages, to send text messages to a group or individual. Higher Level Sound has built "opt-in" phone lists for one-to-one or one-to-many marketing programs, promotions or other uses. It's been our experience that many patrons opt in to receive promotional information when given an incentive, i.e., "Thanks for coming out to see DJ Mike. Be sure to come out Friday for 2 for 1 drink specials."

The Medium Is the Message

As you can tell by the flurry of advertising that promotes texting services, text messaging is hot and getting hotter. DJs should embrace this technology and give audiences a fully interactive and immersive experience at any event. For more information on Pangolin's IMU software, visit their website at www.pangolinsms.com.

Mike Thomas is the owner of Higher Level Sound (www.higherlevelsound.com), a professional DJ/MC entertainment company offering a range of event production services including lighting, video, and laser effects. Higher Level Sound takes experienced DJs and mixes them with the newest technology and innovative ideas to produce unique audience-focused events.



Top Right: Daddy and Daughter DJs, Carlstadt, NJ; Bottom: DJ Toad, Hamilton, OH



As Long As It's Square

By Anthony B. Barthel

I chose the perfect week to test the 2008 Scion xB as a DJ vehicle. Looking at a full week of graduation events, I originally thought the little xB would have to stay home a lot while I took my old full-sized truck to the performances. But then I brought the newly upsized Scion home and my mental "wheels" started spinning.

Since I was doing a middle school field day as the first event, I tried to cram a couple of powered speakers, my gig box and a tool box into the back of the xB. Hey, there was room to spare. So I added several boxes of props and I still had room. I believe I could have put four powered speakers, my source rack and my tool box in the back of the xB without any problem. I might have had to put the cart in the front seat, but this wasn't a bad DJ rig that I had onboard. Not for giant proms and no subs allowed, but still, a surprising amount of gear.

To date, the xB has been an enjoyable ride, especially at the bargain basement price on the window sticker. It already had the credentials of a Toyota Corolla drivetrain but offered much more interior space and the flexibility to become a decent little cargo hauler as well. So how do you improve on the success of the Scion xB?

The answer is, you make the vehicle larger. Scion calls the xB an "urban utility vehicle"—a name that fits—and has given it a foot more length and three inches greater width. There is more interior space for people and stuff, with 21.7 cubic feet of cargo space with the rear seats in place and even more with the seats folded flat. There are also little cargo compartments all over, including one under the back seat that can hide your cell phones, iPods® or whatever.

Oh, and speaking of the iPod, you can attach yours to the audio system with an included jack that allows for the artist, title and track information to be displayed on the stereo's display (while the word "Scion" is displayed on your iPod). You can also use the stereo's controls to find music on the iPod and, if you have the upgraded sound system, that includes controls on the steering wheel.

If you don't have an iPod but have another type of audio device, you can integrate that into the stereo as well through a standard 1/8" mini jack. Kids love music, but so does this middle-aged guy. I just don't think there are many of today's youth blasting Jimmy Buffett from their iPods through this improved stereo system.

I actually DJ'd out of the xB, right on the field, for the middle school field day. The kids loved the car. But what was funny was that when I pulled in, the parents stopped prepping for the field day and surrounded the xB. I don't know who liked the xB more—the parents or their kids.

Also bigger is the xB's standard engine with a 2.4 liter four-cylinder engine that gave the xB a zippy overall feel. In fact, driving this xB is more

pleasant with improved interior and better overall performance. I liked the old one – the new one's even better. What's more, that boxy shape gives it a huge feeling inside without the windshield feeling like it's right at your forehead. I much prefer this type of design to vehicles where you feel like the windshield is inches away from you.

While the xB is larger and able to handle more stuff, I'd like to see a completely removable rear seat so you can haul even more stuff, like the PT Cruiser, or maybe a fold-flat front passenger seat so a surf board or patio umbrella could become cargo. Also, everybody who rode with me in the xB commented on how unpleasant the sound the front doors made when they were closed.

The Scion xB has been popular with all age groups because it's a somewhat uncomplicated solution to transportation issues. It's got a large interior and decent cargo space that are the product of the boxy shape. It's small enough to be good with a gallon of gas but not so small you feel like you're wearing the vehicle. With an affordable price and a Toyota reputation, no wonder people of all ages love this car. And the 2008 model provides just a little more to love. ■

For an interactive automotive calendar, discussions forums, automotive information and much more please visit www.curbside.tv.

We Dig Your Rig

Get your DJ ride featured here by the Transport Authority: Search for the thread "Need pictures of your DJ Wheels/Vans/etc" at the Start.ProDJ.com (<http://start.prodj.com>) forums and simply post a photo of your wheels. Then keep your eyes on this space in future issues.

Track the Facts

Vehicle and Manufacturer
Scion xB by Scion (Toyota)

Model Year
2008

Base Price / Price as Tested
\$16,600 / \$17,804

Major Options
Security System

Engine
2.4L Four

Transmission
Four-Speed Automatic

Days on the Curbside
June 15-22

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A Letter from Camp

Camp Mobile Beat achieves goal of warm summer fun and laid-back learning

Starting out in Rochester, NY with a "family reunion" between the New York and Iowa staff of ProDJ Publishing, the week began with some relaxed conversation. Seizing the unusual opportunity, staff from each of the offices caught up on both work and non-work happenings. The show staff then headed out in Mobile Beat corporate transportation towards the even larger family reunion in Sturbridge, MA, also known as Camp Mobile Beat.

Accent on Casual Enrichment

From its initial naming through the completion of the conference, Camp Mobile Beat was geared as a family event with no major distractions. A casual atmosphere was established immediately at the pre-show gathering, as DJs convened over drinks and great conversation with Cap Capello, the DJ industry's Bose guru.

The next morning started out the conference with exclusive DJ Idea Sharing

events (djideasharing.com). Through a fantastic relationship with Mike and Steve Fernino and Rob Peters, Mobile Beat's shows have been blessed to include this open format networking/educational event over the last few years. At Camp Mobile Beat, DJ Idea Sharing had a chance to deal with much material in greater detail. Topics covered included a range from performance to business and ethics.

As the sun set, the action moved outside and turned to "campy" fun including goofy and wet games, trivia contests, and food appropriate for the venue, such as grilled hot dogs, potato salad, and good old fashioned lemonade. Favorites from past conferences such as Jimmy "Lucky" Johnson, and Keith Alan showed attendees how to have good family fun at summer events.

The Regional Tradeshow: A Good Fit

A day of exhibits and workshops followed on Wednesday with Electronic Bargains and Mainline Pro Lighting and Sound bringing Chauvet, American DJ, Gemini, Denon and many other product lines to the floor. ProDJ's DJWebmin, DJ Event Planner and WEDJ's Gigbuilder showed DJs how to organize their businesses using online tools. Additionally, workshops by MixMeister, Zip2Travel, WEDJ, and SendOutCards showed unique products and services to benefit the industry. Local and national associations, including ADJA, NAME, PDJNE and DJ Idea Sharing facilitated networking among the attending DJs. The conference bookstore offered

fantastic learning materials from conference speakers Peter Merry and Tom Haibeck, along with a ton of other resources. Music services including JonesTM, ERG Music and Promo Only presented exclusive current subscription deals to show attendees, and also brought back issues to the floor. Exhibits by Bose, DJ Rack, Sherman Novelty, ProDJpc, DJ Companion, DJ Skirts were regularly busy with DJs asking about their various products and services. While not the size of the floor at Mobile Beat Las Vegas shows, it was just right for this regional conference.

Educationally Speaking...

Thursday morning, Peter Merry started the day out by inspiring everyone to go much further with their wedding introductions and showing many examples of how humor can be creatively tied into an event. Tom Haibeck, Rob Peters, Chris Jaeger, and James Derosa covered topics ranging from the ins and outs of Internet marketing and overall sales, to pumping up performance skills, and how to expand your business.

Although definitely a smaller event than Mobile Beat's national conferences, this regional show brought out the best entertainers in the Northeast to improve their entertainment businesses and build relationships with fellow professionals and companies serving the DJ market. The show management sends out heartfelt thanks to all who attended Camp Mobile Beat, and to the sponsors who made it happen.

One If By Land, Two If by Sea

Mobile Beat and ProDJ grow together with combined efforts in Florida

Hot off the summer success of Camp Mobile Beat in Sturbridge, MA, Mobile Beat and ProDJ will again combine efforts to put a new spin on an old event this fall in Ft. Lauderdale, Key West, and Cozumel, Mexico.

Those are the land locations for the combined Florida DJ Conference and DJ Cruise 2007. The first all ProDJ Cruise was in 2005, and since 1999, Mobile Beat has produced regional shows in many locations. On top of the list of

projects for MB Trade Show Producer Mike Buonaccorso after the MB/ProDJ merger was to work out a plan that would provide cruise attendees and potential vendors with greater exposure to each other.

One of the problems for cruise-trade shows is the difficulty on many levels of having an exhibit hall onboard a cruise ship. As a result an event was created that would not only solve that dilemma, but would also allow regional DJs a chance to see quality seminar presenters and products.

The Florida DJ Conference will kick off with a full day of seminars on October 30, featuring many veteran Las Vegas presenters including Ken Day, Larry Williams, Dave Van Enger, and KC Kokoruz. That night, local ADJA chapters will welcome the attendees with a Florida-style reception. The following day, October 31, will give all attendees a chance to see and touch the latest in DJ goodies, with exhibits at the El Palacio Hotel

in Ft. Lauderdale, where the land portion will be based. And who could resist the opportunity to take advantage of the calendar?...it's Halloween! Prepare yourself for a night of fun and surprises.

The next day, November 1, the cruise portion begins, leaving Fort Lauderdale and returning Monday November 5 on Royal Caribbean's Enchantment of the Seas, with stops in Key West and Cozumel. After a nautical version of an "extreme makeover" in early 2005, the Enchantment of the Seas is fully refurbished and brimming with exciting new features.

While admission to the DJ Conference is free to those attending the cruise, it is not mandatory and cruisers may arrive any time prior to departure. For those attending only the land portion, a full conference pass is just \$79 through September 30 and \$99 after that. More information on either event can be found through www.djshow.info or www.djcruise.com or by calling 800-257-7635.

By Steve Sharp

Having a list like the *Mobile Beat* Top 200 is both a blessing and a curse, depending on how it's used. It's a great resource for the "IN CASE OF DANCE FLOOR EMERGENCY BREAK GLASS (AND PLAY THIS SONG)" scenario at a party where you just can't seem to get people started on the dance

It's the best of times, it's the worst of times, and as you'll see, both those times can be remarkably similar, as the Top 200 has significant overlap with the "DO NOT Play" list. (See the other list and my thoughts on page 20.) 88% of what's on this year's list has appeared on this list in previous years, so there's a lot of legacy and consistency from year to year. I'm of the belief that in order to write a song that will be immortal, you can do it one of two ways: 1) Write a song that is so good that you just can't forget it; or 2) write a song that is so awful that you can't get it out of your head. In the haze of time, the mediocre is what falls away. The really good and the really bad live on forever. Other than some minor sniping I may take as we look over this year's list, it's up to you to decide which songs are great and which songs are horrible.

Old Standards from a New Perspective

The “Electric Slide” and the “Cha Cha Slide” dropped positions from 2006 to this year, but didn’t go away completely. Dance crazes are cyclical, as is the public’s appetite for them. Perhaps the new chart methodology explains some of the drop here. Or, maybe DJs think audiences enjoy line dances more than their clients do. Or both. Something to consider.

to dance to "Hotel California" by The Eagles (#79); a group hug during a song about a mental institution just seems wrong to me. Your mileage may vary.

Beyond these observations, I'm not sure what can be said that hasn't already been said about the recurring favorites on this chart. (You already knew that the Righteous Brothers aren't actually brothers, didn't you?) So, let's examine the new entries to our annual survey.

The biggest debut for this year's chart (at #7) is Justin Timberlake's "SexyBack," which was clearly heard everywhere in the past year, much like "Yeah!" by Usher was two years ago. In this era of the utterly fragmented entertainment universe, getting a "mainstream hit" is harder than ever. But, take a fresh sound from Timberlake, courtesy of his collaboration with Timbaland and an almost distorted space-disco sound, (thankfully at a tempo that proves you can still have a hit at 117 BPM), and "SexyBack" is a clear winner. I don't know if we ever lost sexy and needed to bring it back, but the style of mainstream dance music that "SexyBack" represents definitely needed to be brought back. Welcome back, indeed.

"Bless the Broken Road" by Rascal Flatts enters at #24, which I believe was driven by its inclusion at many, many weddings over the past year. Country music is often a great source for new love songs, and Rascal Flatts certainly struck a chord with this one. Two other songs by Rascal Flatts also appear, further down the chart: "I Melt" (another great first dance) and "My Wish" (a great parent dance). Another fantastic choice for father/daughter dances (also country) lands at #88, "I Loved Her First" by Heartland, while "She's Everything" by Brad Paisley (yes, another winner for first dances) is here this year, as well.

"Hips Don't Lie" by Shakira, featuring Wyclef Jean, comes in at #42 shrewdly celebrates Shakira's famous hips. Augmented by a reggaeton-influenced backing track with enough elements still of urban and pop styles, it connected with audiences worldwide. It's "hip" and it's "Hips"!

"Crazy," at #85 is the huge sleeper hit that was also everywhere, by a mysterious and oddly-named duo, Gnarls Barkley. In reality, they're DJ/producer Danger Mouse and singer Cee-Lo Green (formerly part of Goodie Mob). "Crazy" captured radio formats right and left with this brilliant soulful slice, that (like "SexyBack") is part retro, part futurism. I look for this combination of elements to continue to bear amazing musical hybrid fruit for the next year with acts like Lily Allen, Amy Winehouse, and Mark Ronson (who produced both of these ladies), as well as the sophomore album from Gnarls Barkley. Will lightning strike Gnarls twice? It could happen, but that would be kinda... crazy.

There are several newer songs that line the lowest 30 or so of the 200, but don't think that indicates that they're somehow inferior. It's just that they have yet to prove themselves to be as "immortal" as many of the legacies before them. Let's face it, due to the nature of mobile entertainment, this is the only chart where a Johnny Cash song from 1956 can somehow coexist with "Smack That" by Akon and Eminem from last year. Do James Blunt or Fergie or Fall Out Boy or Jack Johnson merit the same kind of legend as The Beatles? Not yet—but they're working on it. ■

*RANK	ARTIST	SONG
1	AC/DC	YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG
2	B-52'S	LOVE SHACK
3	VAN MORRISON	BROWN EYED GIRL
4	ABBA	DANCING QUEEN
5	LYNYRD SKYNYRD	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
6	DEF LEPPARD	POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME
7	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	SEXYBACK
8	SISTER SLEDGE	WE ARE FAMILY
9	KOOL & THE GANG	CELEBRATION
10	ERIC CLAPTON	WONDERFUL TONIGHT
11	COMMODORES	BRICK HOUSE
12	BEE GEES	STAYIN' ALIVE
13	SIR MIX-A-LOT	BABY GOT BACK
14	NEIL DIAMOND	SWEET CAROLINE
15	BON JOVI	LIVIN' ON A PRAYER
16	ETTA JAMES	AT LAST
17	LONESTAR	AMAZED
18	VILLAGE PEOPLE	Y.M.C.A.
19	BEATLES	TWIST AND SHOUT
20	RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS	UNCHAINED MELODY
21	FRANK SINATRA	THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT
22	FOUNDATIONS	BUILD ME UP BUTTERCUP
23	TEMPTATIONS	MY GIRL
24	RASCAL FLATTS	BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD
25	WILD CHERRY	PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC
26	GARTH BROOKS	FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES
27	OUTKAST	HEY YA!
28	LOUIS ARMSTRONG	WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD
29	BOB SEGER & S.B.BAND	OLD TIME ROCK & ROLL
30	BLACK EYED PEAS	LET'S GET IT STARTED
31	JIMMY BUFFETT	MARGARITAVILLE
32	ELVIS PRESLEY	CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE
33	CYNDI LAUPER	GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN
34	DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS	COME ON EILEEN
35	KENNY LOGGINS	FOOTLOOSE
36	VANILLA ICE	ICE ICE BABY
37	KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND	GET DOWN TONIGHT
38	MICHAEL JACKSON	BILLIE JEAN
39	CHUBBY CHECKER	THE TWIST
40	TIM MCGRAW W/ FAITH HILL	IT'S YOUR LOVE
41	ROMANTICS	WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU
42	SHAKIRA FT. WYCLEF JEAN	HIPS DON'T LIE
43	PRINCE	KISS
44	GLORIA GAYNOR	I WILL SURVIVE
45	MARVIN GAYE	LET'S GET IT ON
46	ARETHA FRANKLIN	RESPECT
47	CHEAP TRICK	I WANT YOU TO WANT ME
48	FRANK SINATRA	FLY ME TO THE MOON
49	AL GREEN	LET'S STAY TOGETHER
50	BRYAN ADAMS	SUMMER OF '69
51	BLACK EYED PEAS	MY HUMPS
52	QUEEN	CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE
53	USHER FT. LUDACRIS & LIL' JON	YEAH!
54	BIG & RICH	SAVE A HORSE (RIDE A COWBOY)
55	SORTA CRACKERS BAND (+VARIOUS)	CHICKEN DANCE
56	MICHAEL JACKSON	DON'T STOP 'TIL YOU GET ENOUGH
57	J.TRAVOLTA & O.NEWTON-JOHN	GREASE MEGAMIX
58	NATALIE COLE w/ NAT KING COLE	UNFORGETTABLE
59	HOUSE OF PAIN	JUMP AROUND
60	NELLY	HOT IN HERRE

61	50 CENT	IN DA CLUB
62	BRYAN ADAMS	(EVERYTHING I DO) I DO IT FOR YOU
63	VIOLENT FEMMES	BLISTER IN THE SUN
64	YOUNG M.C.	BUST A MOVE
65	DJ CASPER	CHA CHA SLIDE
66	BROOKS & DUNN	BOOT SCOOTIN' BOOGIE
67	UB40	RED RED WINE
68	BARRY WHITE	CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF YOUR LOVE, BABE
69	EARTH, WIND & FIRE	SEPTEMBER
70	JOURNEY	FAITHFULLY
71	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	ROCK YOUR BODY
72	JAMES TAYLOR	HOW SWEET IT IS (TO BE LOVED BY YOU)
73	TONE LOC	WILD THING
74	AEROSMITH	I DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING
75	RICK SPRINGFIELD	JESSIE'S GIRL
76	JOHNNY CASH	RING OF FIRE
77	BARRY WHITE	YOU'RE THE FIRST, THE LAST, MY EVERYTHING
78	JOURNEY	DON'T STOP BELIEVIN'
79	EAGLES	HOTEL CALIFORNIA
80	LOS DEL RIO	MACARENA
81	HOT CHOCOLATE	YOU SEXY THING
82	KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND	(SHAKE, SHAKE, SHAKE) SHAKE YOUR BOOTY
83	C.AGUILERA, LIL' KIM, MYA, PINK	LADY MARMALADE
84	WEATHER GIRLS	IT'S RAINING MEN
85	GNARLS BARKLEY	CRAZY
86	DEAN MARTIN	THAT'S AMORE
87	SIMON & GARFUNKEL	CECILIA
88	HEARTLAND	I LOVED HER FIRST
89	U2	BEAUTIFUL DAY
90	REDNEX	COTTON EYE JOE
91	MADONNA	HOLIDAY
92	MARCIA GRIFFITHS (+VARIOUS)	ELECTRIC BOOGIE (ELECTRIC SLIDE)
93	HARRY CONNICK JR.	IT HAD TO BE YOU
94	NORAH JONES	COME AWAY WITH ME
95	JACKSON 5	ABC
96	TIM MCGRAW	MY BEST FRIEND
97	BEYONCE FT. JAY-Z	CRAZY IN LOVE
98	DION	RUNAROUND SUE
99	BILLY IDOL	WHITE WEDDING
100	PINK	GET THE PARTY STARTED
101	AEROSMITH	WALK THIS WAY
102	BEACH BOYS	KOKOMO
103	PRINCE	1999
104	SEAN PAUL	TEMPERATURE
105	GEORGE STRAIT	I CROSS MY HEART
106	KANYE WEST FT. JAMIE FOXX	GOLD DIGGER
107	QUEEN	ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
108	GWEN STEFANI	HOLLABACK GIRL
109	TONE LOC	FUNKY COLD MEDINA
110	SADE	BY YOUR SIDE
111	PERCY SLEDGE	WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN
112	CHERRY POPPIN' DADDIES	ZOOT SUIT RIOT
113	DEEE-LITE	GROOVE IS IN THE HEART
114	NELLY FURTADO FT. TIMBALAND	PROMISCUOUS [RADIO EDIT]
115	BEATLES	I SAW HER STANDING THERE
116	BEASTIE BOYS	BRASS MONKEY
117	A-HA	TAKE ON ME
118	WILL SMITH	GETTIN' JIGGY WIT IT
119	GAP BAND	YOU DROPPED A BOMB ON ME
120	BEATLES	ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE
121	DIGITAL UNDERGROUND	THE HUMPTY DANCE

122	JET	ARE YOU GONNA BE MY GIRL
123	JOHNNY CASH	I WALK THE LINE
124	PRINCE	LET'S GO CRAZY
125	DONNA SUMMER	LAST DANCE
126	ISLEY BROTHERS	SHOUT
127	PETER GABRIEL	IN YOUR EYES
128	BILLY IDOL	MONY MONY
129	MICHAEL JACKSON	THRILLER
130	VAN MORRISON	MOONDANCE
131	SOFT CELL	TAINTED LOVE
132	FRANK SINATRA	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
133	ROY ORBISON	OH, PRETTY WOMAN
134	RICK JAMES	SUPER FREAK (PART 1)
135	ALISON KRAUSS	WHEN YOU SAY NOTHING AT ALL
136	BRITNEY SPEARS	TOXIC
137	LIFEHOUSE	YOU AND ME
138	SAVAGE GARDEN	TRULY MADLY DEEPLY
139	BANGLES	WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN

SLOW DANCE ESSENTIALS

33 sweet treasures for those special moments
Not in order by rank—the numbers are offered for convenience only.

	ARTIST	SONG
1	ETTA JAMES	AT LAST
2	RASCAL FLATTS	BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD
3	BEATLES	IN MY LIFE
4	MAROON 5	SHE WILL BE LOVED
5	JACK JOHNSON	BETTER TOGETHER
6	MARVIN GAYE	SEXUAL HEALING
7	ELVIS PRESLEY	CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE
8	PERCY SLEDGE	WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN
9	JOURNEY	FAITHFULLY
10	LIFEHOUSE	YOU AND ME
11	JOURNEY	OPEN ARMS
12	HEARTLAND	I LOVED HER FIRST
13	JAMES BLUNT	YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL
14	NORAH JONES	COME AWAY WITH ME
15	ERIC CLAPTON	WONDERFUL TONIGHT
16	LONESTAR	AMAZED
17	RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS	UNCHAINED MELODY
18	FRANK SINATRA	THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT
19	LOUIS ARMSTRONG	WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD
20	MARVIN GAYE	LET'S GET IT ON
21	NATALIE COLE W/ NAT KING COLE	UNFORGETTABLE
22	BRYAN ADAMS	(EVERYTHING I DO) I DO IT FOR YOU
23	AEROSMITH	I DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING
24	U2	ALL I WANT IS YOU
25	SADE	BY YOUR SIDE
26	VAN MORRISON	MOONDANCE
27	KELLY CLARKSON	A MOMENT LIKE THIS
28	CELINE DION	BECAUSE YOU LOVED ME
29	CHICAGO	YOU'RE THE INSPIRATION
30	ROD STEWART	HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY
31	98 DEGREES	I DO (CHERISH YOU)
32	BILLY JOEL	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE
33	K-CI & JOJO	ALL MY LIFE

140	BRIAN SETZER ORCHESTRA	JUMP JIVE AN' WAIL
141	BEE GEES	YOU SHOULD BE DANCING
142	BLACK EYED PEAS	PUMP IT
143	FRANK SINATRA	COME FLY WITH ME
144	ALAN JACKSON & JIMMY BUFFETT	IT'S FIVE O'CLOCK SOMEWHERE
145	ELVIS PRESLEY	ALL SHOOK UP
146	CHUBBY CHECKER	LET'S TWIST AGAIN
147	JOURNEY	OPEN ARMS
148	PUSSYCAT DOLLS	DON'T CHA
149	GARTH BROOKS	THE DANCE
150	MEAT LOAF	PARADISE BY THE DASHBOARD LIGHT
151	WANG CHUNG	EVERYBODY HAVE FUN TONIGHT
152	CIARA FT. MISSY ELLIOTT	1, 2 STEP
153	BEATLES	IN MY LIFE
154	KELLY CLARKSON	A MOMENT LIKE THIS
155	ABBA	TAKE A CHANCE ON ME
156	MARVIN GAYE	SEXUAL HEALING
157	TEMPTATIONS	AIN'T TOO PROUD TO BEG
158	BARRY MANILOW	COPACABANA (AT THE COPA)
159	U2	WITH OR WITHOUT YOU
160	KEITH URBAN	MAKING MEMORIES OF US
161	CHRISTINA AGUILERA	AIN'T NO OTHER MAN
162	ALAN JACKSON	REMEMBER WHEN
163	CELINE DION	BECAUSE YOU LOVED ME
164	BEE GEES	NIGHT FEVER
165	RIGHT SAID FRED	I'M TOO SEXY
166	MADONNA	VOGUE
167	CHICAGO	YOU'RE THE INSPIRATION
168	FRANK SINATRA	I'VE GOT YOU UNDER MY SKIN
169	MAROON 5	SHE WILL BE LOVED
170	RIHANNA	S.O.S. (RESCUE ME)
171	ROD STEWART	HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY
172	STRAY CATS	ROCK THIS TOWN
173	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE FT. T.I.	MY LOVE
174	MADONNA	LIKE A PRAYER
175	98 DEGREES	I DO (CHERISH YOU)
176	AKON FT. EMINEM	SMACK THAT [CLEAN]
177	BILLY JOEL	JUST THE WAY YOU ARE
178	ALABAMA	MOUNTAIN MUSIC
179	FALL OUT BOY	DANCE, DANCE
180	CASCADA	EVERYTIME WE TOUCH
181	K-CI & JOJO	ALL MY LIFE
182	JAMES BLUNT	YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL
183	BILL MEDLEY & JENNIFER WARNES	(I'VE HAD) THE TIME OF MY LIFE
184	FERGIE FT. WILL.I.AM	FERGALICIOUS [RADIO EDIT]
185	JACK JOHNSON	BETTER TOGETHER
186	BLACK EYED PEAS	HEY MAMA
187	TIMBALAND	GIVE IT TO ME [CLEAN]
188	KELIS	MILKSHAKE
189	OUTKAST FT. SLEEPY BROWN	THE WAY YOU MOVE
190	GUNS N' ROSES	SWEET CHILD O' MINE
191	RIHANNA	PON DE REPLAY
192	FERGIE FT. LUDACRIS	GLAMOROUS
193	DESTINY'S CHILD	BOOTYLICIOUS
194	RASCAL FLATTS	MY WISH
195	RASCAL FLATTS	I MELT
196	WILL SMITH	SWITCH
197	LEE ANN WOMACK	I HOPE YOU DANCE
198	FERGIE	LONDON BRIDGE
199	BRAD PAISLEY	SHE'S EVERYTHING
200	U2	ALL I WANT IS YOU

Mobile Beat subscribers can download extra category lists as part of an expanded Top 200 feature, available only at www.mobilebeat.com. Representative tracks from various genres have been pulled out and combined for your viewing pleasure. Subscribe online today and get your hands on the rest of The List!

Top 40 DO NOT Play List

*RANK	ARTIST	SONG
1	VARIOUS	CHICKEN DANCE
2	LOS DEL RIO	MACARENA
3	VILLAGE PEOPLE	Y.M.C.A
4	REDNEX	COTTON EYE JOE
5	DJ CASPER / MR. C THE SLIDE MAN	CHA CHA SLIDE
6	LOU BEGA	MAMBO #5
7	MARCIA GRIFFITHS	ELECTRIC BOOGIE (ELECTRIC SLIDE)
8	WILD CHERRY	PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC
9	BLACK EYED PEAS	MY HUMPS
10	SIR MIX-A-LOT	BABY GOT BACK
11	BILLY IDOL	MONY MONY
12	VAN MORRISON	BROWN EYED GIRL
13	B-52'S	LOVE SHACK
14	GWEN STEFANI	HOLLABACK GIRL
15	PUSSYCAT DOLLS	DON'T CHA
16	KOOL & THE GANG	CELEBRATION
17	RAY ANTHONY	BUNNY HOP
18	BLACK EYED PEAS	LET'S GET IT STARTED
19	SHANIA TWAIN	YOU'RE STILL THE ONE
20	50 CENT	IN DA CLUB
21	CELINE DION	MY HEART WILL GO ON
22	BRITNEY SPEARS	TOXIC
23	MICHAEL JACKSON	BILLIE JEAN
24	BOB CARLISLE	BUTTERFLY KISSES
25	ABBA	DANCING QUEEN
26	KELLY CLARKSON	A MOMENT LIKE THIS
27	BLACK EYED PEAS	HEY MAMA
28	CHUBBY CHECKER	THE TWIST
29	BIG & RICH	SAVE A HORSE (RIDE A COWBOY)
30	J.TRAVOLTA & O.NEWTON-JOHN	GREASE MEGAMIX
31	VILLAGE PEOPLE	MACHO MAN
32	BAHA MEN	WHO LET THE DOGS OUT
33	GARTH BROOKS	FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES
34	BETTE MIDLER	WIND BENEATH MY WINGS
35	PINK	GET THE PARTY STARTED
36	DONNA SUMMER	LAST DANCE
37	WEATHER GIRLS	IT'S RAINING MEN
38	NELLY	HOT IN HERRE
39	GLORIA GAYNOR	I WILL SURVIVE
40	SISQO	THONG SONG

*This list also comes from the DJ Intelligence system, but with a little human interpretation to make sense of the data. Here are the songs that rose to the top of the heap (refuse heap?) when the results were sorted.—The Editors

Please...Don't!

By Steve Sharp

There's a love-hate relationship lurking in the soul of the Top 200

As you're looking over the Top 200 and the Top 40 DO NOT Play List, double check to make sure you're looking at the correct list!

A whopping 100% of the songs on the DNP list are ALSO on the Top 200 list, although a scant few are only on recent years' lists. As if you didn't already know this, may I remind you to KNOW YOUR CLIENTS! Make sure you know which clients you're performing in front of, especially before playing anything on this list! All the played-out, corny, and even overly-horny hits are here. It's the playlist for an SNL sketch of everything that's wrong with mobile DJs, at least as far as music goes.

The Corny

The fact that "The Chicken Dance" is even more loathed than the "burnt out to a crisp" "Macarena" surprises me. Some clients might LOVE The Chicken Dance, but clearly, a lot of them HATE it, too. A whopping SIX of the top seven on this chart are line dances. Wow. Remember, this list was tabulated from clients of DJs. Do they hate to love it, or love to hate it?

The Played Out

While it's ironic that too much success is the major reason NOT to play certain songs, that's precisely why some people choose them for their own DNP lists. These are the songs that make you want to kill small animals (or DJs), and much to your own disgust, you know every single word of the lyrics, every guitar lick, and bass kick. Ugh, get out of my head, horrible songs!

If I never hear "Celebration" by Kool & The Gang again (#16), it's fine by me. I lived through the Disco Era, and I do like a lot of disco, but not this one. Let me be blunt: I thought it was crap when it was new, and it hasn't gotten any better or more interesting the more I'm subjected to playing it. (ONLY when it's requested and also not on a client's "do not play" list; I have almost never voluntarily played this song.)

"Love Shack" was a wonderful song the first couple hundred times I played it. After that, it started to annoy me. But if it's on the client's must-play list, I'll smile and you'd think I LOVE this song!

To this date, I have never seen the movie Titanic. It became SUCH a cultural phenomenon that I got burnt out on it sight unseen. As the ship sank (eventually) so sank Celine Dion's "My Heart Will Go On." Syrupy sweetness is wonderful, but...the taste always fades away, sometimes quickly, sometimes more slowly. I believe "Butterfly Kisses" has suffered this fate, as has "Wind Beneath My Wings" by Bette Midler.

Risqué Business?

Again, know your audience! It just might not be a great idea to play "My Humps" or "The Thong Song" in front of grandparents and/or young cousins at a wedding. Where is the line? Well, it depends on your clients, the setting, and the event itself. Don't discount the value of proper timing. IF you're going to push the envelope on content, 1) make sure your clients are "with you" on it, and 2) don't start your event in this vein...get there eventually, possibly AFTER grandma and grandpa have retired for the evening, and the kids have also gone to bed.

I've seen people get really offended by songs as seemingly innocent (today) as "Brown Eyed Girl" because it seems to reference premarital sex (probably more of a scandal in 1967). And it's pretty common knowledge that when a song prominently features profanity, even when it's been removed from the "radio version," a segment of the audience (often a large segment) will sing and/or shout the missing profanities. When it comes to youth events like the ones mentioned throughout this MB issue, you especially don't want to lie down on the tracks and let that party train destroy your credibility.

As with my personal "favorite," by Kool & The Gang, we have to learn to grin and bear it. (Just don't clench those teeth too hard!)

Here's hoping your clients put the songs you hate on THEIR next DO NOT Play list. ■

Steve Sharp is a DJ in Southern California who has been spinning since 1981. In addition to running his own Signature Entertainment, he also creates a weekly radio remix show for Bo's Saturday Night Party on B95.1 FM. Steve not only plays the hits, but brings his encyclopedic knowledge of the stories behind them to each of his music columns. Steve can be reached at thatdj@aol.com.



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Going Back to School

By Jay Maxwell

DJs of just about any age can find success at high school events

A recent editorial cartoon in the newspaper showed a young teenager tossing his latest technological "gizmo" onto a mountain of discarded electronic rubbish of computers, games, and MP3 players. Standing beside him was an adult who had not yet had time to withdraw his hand after giving the teen his newest piece of modern-day entertainment. The caption for the picture was the boy saying, "OK, I'm bored. What's next?!"

This is very much like playing the music for a high school or other older youth-oriented function. The music must be cutting-edge and for the most part, fresh and hot off the press. While some songs like "Shout" or "The Electric Slide" remain as standards, most of the songs requested have just hit the airwaves. Unlike wedding receptions, corporate events, or reunions, where there is typically a wide variety of music played, a high school event will usually have a narrow focus of genres and also a very narrow time frame of when the songs were recorded. But like any event, a high school function requires foresight and planning on the part of the disc jockey.

Staying Current Builds Staying Power

One of the biggest advantages to performing for high school dances is that the school can become a regular client and a source of steady income throughout not only the school year, but also for years to come. Through the years, our company has maintained several schools as regular clients by offering them multi-booking discounts (booking several events for their school year at the same time) and offering them the same high quality service at every event that we offer our higher paying clients. The trust that has been established with our company by the schools

Times have changed as far as the format of the music, but the need to keep current has remained the same.

has made us the most requested DJ company in the area for teen functions. One of reasons for our success is keeping our music library current. The music requested is almost all high-energy, as can be seen from this issue's list, with a few slow songs scattered throughout the evening.

From the start of our business 25 years ago, we were always buying the latest music. For many years we looked forward to going to the record store and buying the latest tunes on 45 singles. Times have changed as far as the format of the music, but the need to keep current has remained the same. Now, we subscribe to a music service that sends us the latest songs all on one or two CDs per month. Another way we keep current is to always purchase the latest "NOW That's What I Call Music!" CDs. Though by the time these CDs hit the stores, most DJs have the music already, it provides a great source of contemporary music all on one CD.

To Play or Not to Play...

There are several challenges for the DJ performing for high school events. Clearly, one

challenge that we face is the lyrical content and language of the songs requested. I am personally still baffled why otherwise "good" music (i.e. has a great beat and is very danceable) often contains objectionable content, usually sexual in nature, or offensive language. Hopefully the tide will soon turn and we will have more selections that are popular, great to dance to, and have a positive message. We strive to play the music that the teens request while at the same time staying within the bounds of decency. The battle that we face is the argument from the teens that if they hear it on the publically available radio waves, why question whether or not we can play it at their dance?

A solution that we have employed is part of our preplanning. Often, we ask the adult sponsor – usually a teacher – to gather from the students their song requests before the event and put her "stamp of approval" on all those songs. Though this requires extra work on the part of the teacher, it rests the primary responsibility of song selection on the adults in charge of the dance. It should also facilitate discussion



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between the teacher and the students (or at least a representative body of students) about the content of today's hits. Using this approach, we have found that even some conservative schools that had, in the past, cautioned us on some of the songs we played, had actually listed allowable songs that we had deemed inappropriate, even though we had the edited versions. So, regardless of the "sanctioned" list we often would not play songs that we

felt might offend someone or was against our standards.

Responsible Parties

Parties that are sponsored by the school will always be well chaperoned and are usually attended by teens who just want to have a good time. These same teens might also, in turn, want to hire you for smaller private functions like a birthday party (especially a Sweet 16

party) or their graduation party. Here there is the possibility that the teen might be trying to put together the party herself. If this is the case, make certain that the parents are the ones who sign your agreement and will be there for the duration of the party. If no adult supervision is guaranteed to you, do not put yourself in the position of being held responsible for the actions of the minors. Also, there should be no alcohol served at any youth event unless the parents allow the beverages only for the legal adults.

The Prom and Beyond

When most people think about school functions, the first (and perhaps only) event that comes to mind will be the end-of-year prom. This is a capstone of one's high school memories, and an event at which we consider it a privilege to entertain, but several other opportunities await the mobile DJ. Several of our schools also employ us for their winter formal. This event is similar to the prom. Students usually dress up in either formal wear or their "Sunday best," a king and queen are often chosen, and a few more slow songs are played than at a "normal" school dance. If a school has a JROTC, they will usually have a spring military ball. These formal events have the cadets in their military uniforms, and prior to the dance they usually have a presentation of colors with the flags, followed by a meal and several presentations. Homecoming dances are also a mainstay; and of course to get the school year kicked off with a bang, many schools will hire us for a "back to school" dance.

As with other types of events, one size doesn't fit all. We have found that the music requested at one high school can vary significantly from another high school across town. These differences in musical taste can be attributed to several factors, most of which can not be predicted. The point to be made here is that there isn't one list that can be used for all schools. In fact, the "general" list changes so quickly that it is virtually impossible to predict what will work at the same school's event the next time we attend. Many may think that younger DJs would have an advantage performing at teen events, but with the right planning, even seasoned performers can return to high school and party with those young people shouting, "play something we can dance to!"

Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (in issue #11 and every one since), Jay Maxell runs the multi-unit, multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Mathematics and Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, Play Something We Can Dance To (See Showcase section for more info.)

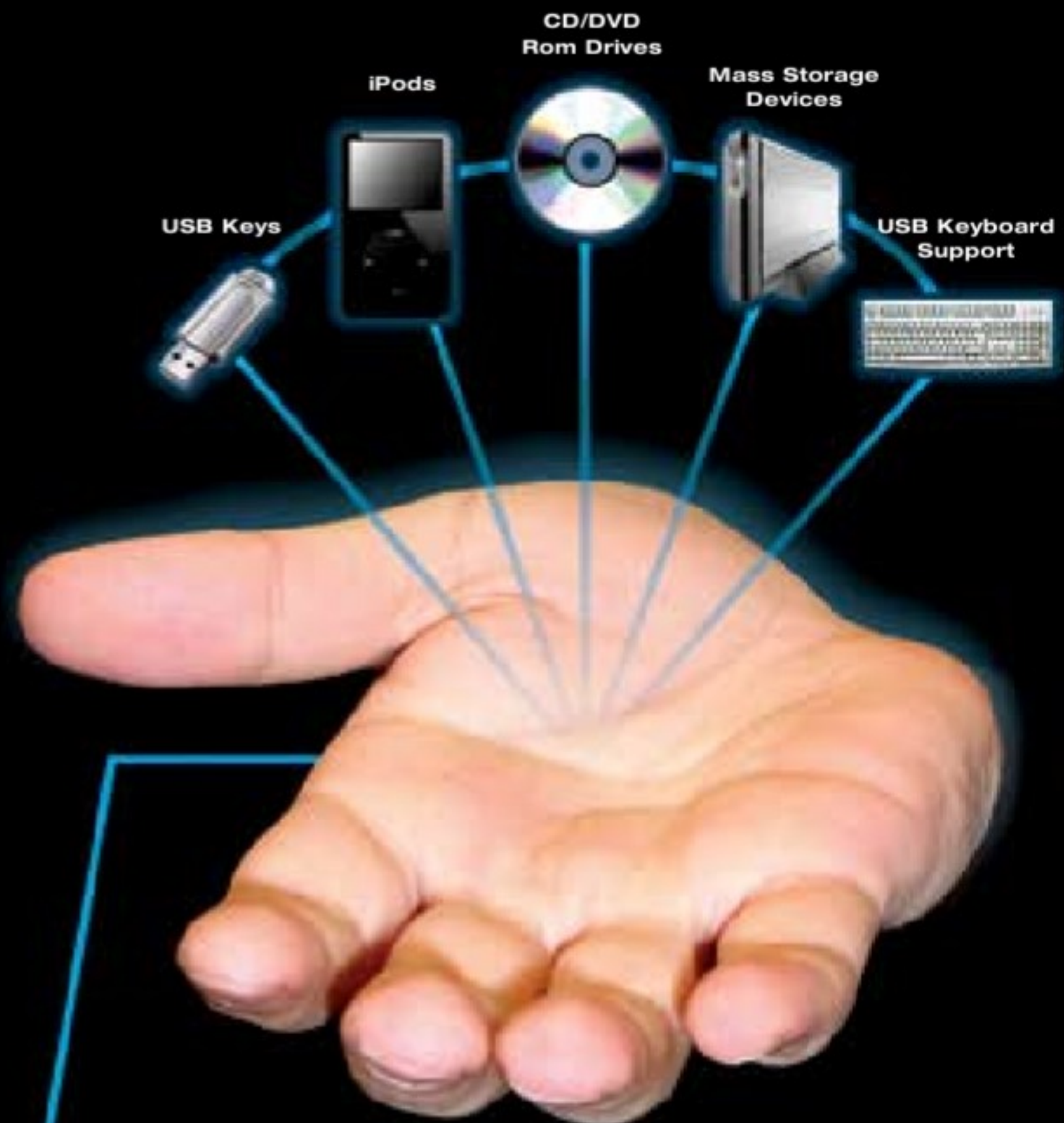
Teen Beats

RANK	ARTIST	SONG TITLE	YEAR	BPM
1	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	SEXYBACK	2006	117
2	FERGIE	FERGALICIOUS	2006	130
3	MR. C - CASPER	CHA CHA SLIDE	2001	122
4	MIMS	THIS IS WHY I'M HOT	2007	80
5	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	SUMMER LOVE	2007	96
6	FERGIE	GLAMOROUS	2007	131
7	NELLY FURTADO	PROMISCUOUS	2006	114
8	PUSSYCAT DOLLS	DON'T CHA	2005	120
9	SHOP BOYZ	PARTY LIKE A ROCKSTAR	2007	72
10	GWEN STEFANI	SWEET ESCAPE	2007	120
11	FERGIE	LONDON BRIDGE	2006	91
12	DEM FRANCHIZE BOYS	LEAN WIT IT, ROCK WIT IT	2006	76
13	OUTKAST	HEY YA!	2003	159
14	MARCIA GRIFFITHS	ELECTRIC BOOGIE (SLIDE)	1990	108
15	SHAKIRA	HIPS DON'T LIE	2006	100
16	RIHANNA	PON DE REPLAY	2005	99
17	NELLY FURTADO	SAY IT RIGHT	2006	117
18	USHER	YEAH!	2004	105
19	RIHANNA	SOS	2006	137
20	GWEN STEFANI	HOLLABACK GIRL	2005	110
21	CIARA	GET UP	2006	129
22	TIMBERLAND	GIVE IT TO ME	2007	110
23	CUPID	CUPID SHUFFLE	2007	143
24	D4L	LAFFY TAFFY	2006	77
25	BLACK EYED PEAS	LETS GET IT STARTED	2004	85
26	RIHANNA	SHUT UP AND DRIVE	2007	132
27	SEAN PAUL	TEMPERATURE	2006	125
28	GNARLS BARKLEY	CRAZY	2006	112
29	SEAN KINGSTON	BEAUTIFUL GIRLS	2007	130
30	REDNEX	COTTON EYE JOE	1995	132
31	NELLY	HOT IN HERRE	2002	107
32	OTIS DAY	SHOUT	1978	200
33	PUSSYCAT DOLLS	STICKWITU	2005	80
34	MAROON 5	THIS LOVE	2004	95
35	RIHANNA / JAY-Z	UMBRELLA	2007	87
36	FALL OUT BOY	THANKS FR TH MMRS	2007	155
37	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	MY LOVE	2006	120
38	DIDDY / KEYSHIA COLE	LAST NIGHT	2007	121
39	JIBBS	CHAIN HANG LOW	2006	78
40	CHRISTINA AGUILERA	AIN'T NO OTHER MAN	2006	128
41	USHER	CAUGHT UP	2005	110
42	GYM CLASS HEROES	CUPID'S CHOKEHOLD	2006	80
43	RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS	DANI CALIFORNIA	2006	96
44	KATHARINE MCPHEE	LOVE STORY	2007	111
45	GREEN DAY	WAKE ME UP WHEN SEPT ENDS	2005	105
46	BLACK EYED PEAS	PUMP IT	2006	154
47	BEYONCE/ JAY Z	DÉJÀ VU	2006	106
48	FALL OUT BOY	"DANCE, DANCE"	2005	115
49	BEYONCE	CHECK ON IT	2006	83
50	WEEZER	BEVERLY HILLS	2005	88

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Classic Dances and Today's Youth

By Mike Ficher

To connect with the youth of today, mobile entertainers might benefit by reaching to yesterday

While new dances and routines are welcome and valuable to keep presentations fresh and appealing, classic dances, particularly the fad movements of the 1950s and 1960s, could be just the ticket to engage younger audiences, particularly elementary school age children.

Swing Time

For many years following World War II, while music continued to evolve, particularly in the genres of Western Swing and Jump Blues, toward the blossoming of rock & roll into mainstream consciousness, Americans continued to dance together, whether the preferred choice was Jitterbug, Swing or one of the popular Latin dances, Mambo or Cha Cha.

In 1958, a group of vacationing Southern California teenagers was in a corner of the studio at the popular daily dance show, American Bandstand, practicing a hot new move captivating the emerging West Coast metropolis. A few of Bandstand's regulars asked the guests to show them the cool new dance. After prominent inclusion in that day's broadcast, the Bop became a nationwide sensation. Dancing together became passé and the floor would never be the same.

Twistin' the Night Away

On the heels of the Bop, the Stroll, the Hand Jive and the Twist emerged—due in no small part to exposure on Bandstand and the pervasive influence of host Dick Clark—as staples on the nation's dance floors. And, here in the fresh new century, these movements can still be powerful influences on your youth dance floors.

Stroll into the Spotlight

A hip update of the old Virginia Reel, the Stroll features dancers forming tight contra lines, creating a lane down the middle wide enough to allow two to stroll down the aisle. Dancers perform mirror patterns; when one side of the line is stepping with their left the opposite is

moving with their right foot. (See sidebar for a detailed description.)

Emerging from the black communities and danced originally to such Chuck Willis classics as "C.C. Rider" and "Betty and Dupree," the Stroll stands as one of the few nationally-popular line dances of the 50s and 60s.

While adherence to the six basic rules of dance instruction inclusion in DJ-presentations—know your stuff, simple dances, lingo avoidance, entertain more than instruct, timing and a people-friendly partner—are requisite, with younger crowds, emphasis on the fun is critical.

Be less concerned about the quality of the lines and the expertise displayed by the dancers; be more attentive to the joy of the experience. Encourage the kids to strut their stuff, be creative and unique while dancing down the aisle; you might not even show them the choreographed aisle movement.

Even junior high and high school audiences may enjoy the Stroll, particularly the opportunity to relish some prime time down the aisle.

Hand Jive

One of the highlights in the now retro cinema classic Grease (is the movie really 30 years old?!), the Hand Jive remains of the most popular audience participation dances and may be the highlight of your youth dance. Although many variations of the basic pattern exist, the attached sidebar is the generally accepted choreography for the movement.

Do not spend an inordinate amount of time teaching the dance—the kids will follow along as best they can. Mingle with the audience, smile incessantly and have fun. Any movement outside of the choreography can be referred to as a variation that you have not yet conceived!

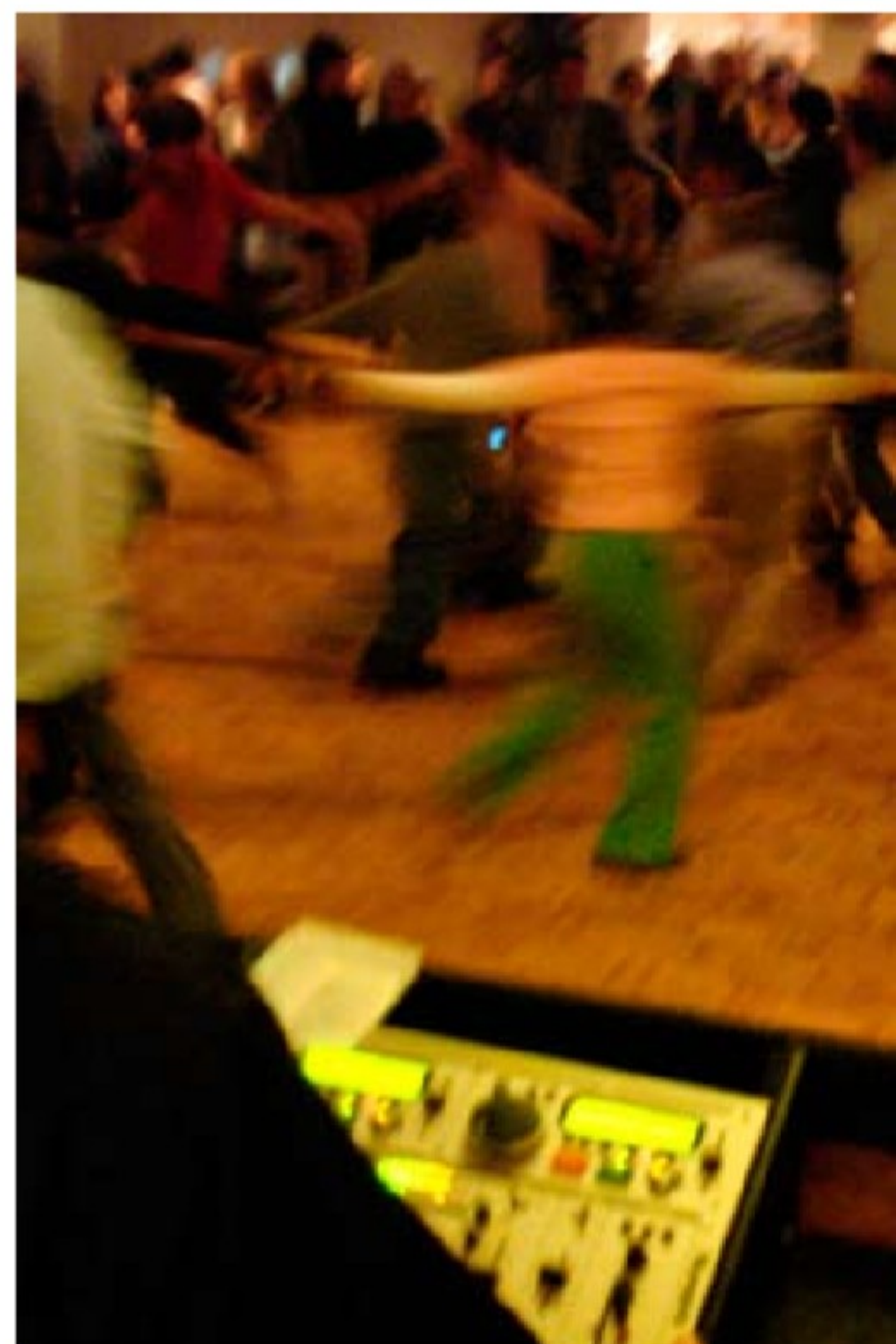
The Twist

Although written by Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductee Hank Ballard, and featured as a B-side on the 1958 single "Teardrops on Your Letter," Chubby Checker popularized the dance through exposure on American Bandstand in 1960. The Twist swept the nation like no other dance before or since. From youth to upper-crust society to the Kennedys in the White House, in the early 1960s, America was doing the Twist.

A significant part of the popularity of the Twist lies in its simplicity. With one foot ahead of the other, envision you are squishing a bug with the ball of your front foot while the heel swivels left and right. The hips—not the entire body—move with the direction of the heel.

In addition to "The Twist," Chubby recorded a suite of twist records including "Let's Twist Again," "Twist It Up," and "Slow Twistin'." Plus, about every artist imaginable, from the Isley Brothers

Even junior high and high school audiences may enjoy the Stroll, particularly the opportunity to relish some prime time down the aisle.



Six DJ Dance Instruction Essentials

1. Know your stuff
2. Stick to simple dances
3. Avoid special dance lingo
4. Entertain more than instruct
5. Get a firm grasp of timing
6. Team up with a people-friendly partner



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to Danny and the Juniors to Ray Anthony recorded Twist records. However, sticking with the familiar suspects from the Beatles' "Twist and Shout" to Sam Cooke's "Twistin' the Night Away" to Chubby's big Twist hits is probably the best course of action.

Blast from the Past

When entertaining the youth of today, particularly the elementary school set, a mobile entertainer might be well served by calling upon the past. Recent years have seen a dearth of exciting new organized dance ideas. While this might not affect older teen events, middle schoolers and younger will especially take to these dancefloor "blasts from the past." They provide just another trick to pull out of your bag when entertaining younger crowds.

For more info on these and other audience participation dances, please visit www.danceexpress.com



Mobile DJ, dance instructor, MC, voice actor, writer, teacher, and improv comedian, Mike Ficher owns and operates Dance Express mobile entertainment, based in Bend, Oregon. A four-time presenter and host at Mobile Beat conventions, Mike has been expanding the public's definition of the mobile entertainer since 1986.



DANCE DETAILS

The STROLL

- 1 Music: "Stroll" Diamonds, "C.C. Rider" Chuck Willis, "Betty and Dupree" Chuck Willis, "Walking to New Orleans" Fats Domino, "You Really Got a Hold on Me" Miracles
- 2 Type: Contra lines
- 3 Counts: Basic: 12, center walk: 6

COUNTS & DESCRIPTION

BASIC PATTERN RIGHT SIDE TOWARD FRONT OF LINE

- 1-2 Touch LEFT in front of right; touch LEFT back to previous position
 - 3-4 Touch LEFT in front of right; step LEFT to left side
 - 5-6 Cross RIGHT behind left; step out left w/LEFT
 - 7-8 Touch RIGHT in front of left; touch RIGHT back to previous position
 - 9-10 Touch RIGHT in front of left; step RIGHT to right side
 - 11-12 Cross LEFT behind right; step out right w/RIGHT
- To coincide with the song's beat, start dance with a timing step out with right foot. Execute this step only once at the beginning of the song. Repeat basic continuously until you perform aisle walk.

BASIC PATTERN LEFT SIDE TOWARD FRONT OF LINE

- 1-2 Touch RIGHT in front of left; touch RIGHT back to original position
- 3-4 Touch RIGHT in front of left; step RIGHT to right side
- 5-6 Cross LEFT behind right; step out right w/RIGHT
- 7-8 Touch LEFT in front of right; touch LEFT back to original position
- 9-10 Touch LEFT in front of right; step LEFT to left side
- 11-12 Cross RIGHT behind left; step out left w/LEFT

AISLE WALK RIGHT SIDE TOWARD FRONT OF LINE

- 1-2 Turning 90 CCW (facing open lane), step into lane with LEFT foot; slide RIGHT behind left
 - 3-4 Walk forward w/LEFT; walk forward w/RIGHT
 - 5-6 Slide LEFT behind right; step forward w/RIGHT
- Count 1 on aisle walk replaces count 4 on basic pattern. Complete basic pattern steps 1,2, and 3, then head down the aisle! When you reach the end of the line traveling down the middle, fold into contra lines and pick up basic pattern when comfortable.

Hand JIVE

- 1 Music: "Willie and the Hand Jive" Johnny Otis Show, "Hey Little Girl" Dee Clark, "Bo Diddley" Bo Diddley, "I Want Candy" Strangeloves
- 2 Type: Open
- 3 Counts: 16

COUNTS/DESCRIPTION

BASIC PATTERN - DOUBLE TIME

- 1& Slap thighs twice with both hands
- 2& Clap hands twice
- 3& Cross LEFT hand over right at chest height twice with palms facing ground
- 4& Cross RIGHT hand over left at chest height twice with palms facing ground
- 5& Tap LEFT fist on top of right fist at chest height twice
- 6& Tap RIGHT fist on top of left fist at chest height twice
- 7& Touch left elbow with RIGHT hand twice (elbow parallel to body and at chest height)
- 8& Touch right elbow with LEFT hand twice (elbow parallel to body and at chest height)

BASIC PATTERN - SINGLE TIME

- 9-10 Hitchhike with LEFT hand twice
- 11-12 Hitchhike with RIGHT hand twice
- 13-14 With both feet, jump forward; with both feet, jump back
- 15-16 Hop forward three times in two counts (bunny hop)

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By Ryan Burger

OFFERING THE GAME SHOW OPTION MIGHT BE JUST WHAT YOUR DJ SERVICE NEEDS TO CRACK THE SCHOOL MARKET

The hottest television game show of the year may come and go, but the fun that you can bring to personalized events can stay in the minds of your client's guests for much longer. Our disc jockey service expanded into producing game shows nearly ten years ago, and in that time we have used our game show equipment in somewhere around 100 different events. But, unlike weddings, hardly any of them were very similar to each other. A game show event gives you tons of flexibility and opportunity for fun that goes beyond a fantastically produced grand entrance for the bride and groom or thumpin' the latest tunes at the high school dance. Among the seasoned game show hosts/DJs interviewed here,

there is consistency, but there are also some unique approaches to hosting game shows.

Jumping In

"When it was introduced," recalls Keith Alan of Keith Alan Productions in Waterford, Connecticut, "no one in my area wanted it, and it was too expensive for them. So I took the bite and jumped in and as soon as I bought it, I brought it back and told all the other DJs they could rent it from me."

For many DJs, one creative application of game shows is with elementary schools, first grade through sixth grade. This isn't traditionally a strong age group for DJs, but the technology can help you grow in this area. Most of the DJs that I spoke to explained that it's primarily weekday business—which all of us could use more of.

Jamie Simpson from HouseRockers in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area found game shows to be yet another expansion of his total entertainment philosophy, including many other services. "Schools were calling, looking for end-of-the-year events for their school dances. We were starting to use inflatables and they were looking for other options and the game show just became available. We were using it a little bit for corporates, but hadn't thought of it for schools until they came asking."

Getting Gigs

"We have done some marketing," explains Simpson, "but usually it's through parents that we have met through other parent teacher organizations and parents talk[ing] to each other, so once a school has something that is unique, the word spreads."

Keith Alan points out that "PTA and PTOs have conventions just like DJs. You can get a booth at a PTA convention and sell your services...All of the PTA presidents attend this show and they are the ones that spend the money."

Dean Lichtenwalner from Creative Imagineering, a leading game show gear manufacturer, has personally pursued the after-school market. He says, "We use a Have a Ball or Face Off game show with a powered speaker for a quick roll-in. Now these aren't the best-paying jobs, but you can still get two to three hundred dollars for an hour or two of work." These after-school care programs are looking for different activities every week to keep the kids entertained while their parents get off work and come to pick them up.

"It's all about getting your foot in the door, and sometimes getting it in the backdoor is better than the front door."

Additionally, "Dr. Dean" has done the same type of program for summer camps with some fantastic success. The summer camp leaders are the same people that are involved in the after school programs.

"Every state website has lists that you can get," says Rob Peters of Rob Peters Entertainment (Braintree, Massachusetts). "Any marketing that I do has mention of our game shows on it. We do large mailings of postcards to schools, camps, daycares—anywhere involving kids that want to have fun."

Peters has actually provided educational fun while school is still in session: "Prepping for MCATs (or other standardized tests) is another place that we have got our game show involved in, with classrooms competing against classrooms."

Tom Dorscher of DigiGames, another major game show maker, offers some simple but effective marketing methods: "I've been able to receive many game show bookings by the school's discovery of our game show web page on our site. Also, if a school called me for pricing and availability, I always ask, 'Are you looking for a dance, trivia game show, or combo of the two?' (as if I didn't already know that they were aware of our game show gear). Having piqued their curiosity with that one simple question, they always inquire about the trivia game show and what it is all about. As a result of that question, we have secured many school events for their after-prom parties, fundraisers, and general events."

Going up a couple years into the junior high and high school market is where my company has been most successful, with gigs such as after-proms and fundraisers. There have been several schools where we have gotten in because of the uniqueness of our game show productions for their after-prom dances, and have then been considered and hired for other school dances. In some cases we use just one quickly moving crew, setting up the after-prom before the prom dance starts, and then having an extra crew member tearing the school dance out while the primary MC moves from the main dance to the party afterwards.

It takes only a little "infection" to spread the word. When we first started doing game shows more than 10 years ago, we gave it away with our DJ package as side entertainment at events such as carnivals, kids' shows, etc. That way, it got in front of people, and that's all it took to create momentum. Fun like this is extremely contagious.

Welcome to the Show

"As long as you have questions that are age-appropriate, game shows work at all school age levels," says Jamie Simpson. "What we did was ask a school that we were well 'in' with on our other services...to give us 20-30 questions that would be perfect for their grade level. We were then able to use those questions for several years at any schools we wanted to." The HouseRockers game shows at schools range from a 45-minute show for the entire school to one-shot assembly for \$350-\$500. Simpson also reports that other schools

"will have us for \$800-\$1000 for a full day show where they will swap-in different grades every 45 minutes or so." With older groups, he has been able to market it so that on some prime nights (for example, during prom season) the game show unit is used three times in one night. "We did a prom, an early post-prom from 1:00 to 2:00 AM and another from 3:00 to 4:00 AM."

Simpson points out an important aspect of game show production: "Where the game show really shines is when you are able to incorporate the whole show aspect into it versus just a question and answer game."

You don't want to be like Alex Trabek on Jeopardy and stand up there just asking questions. The key is production value. Make the contestants think they are really part of the show; get audience members involved as cheering sections or go into the crowd and give away some prizes with quick trivia questions while someone else on your crew is getting the contestants ready. As several of the hosts pointed out, you want to get everyone involved. Take it beyond what they are used to seeing on television where they can't be part of the action.

As you can probably tell by now, these are usually very high-energy events, and can be very personally gratifying. Our best shows by far have been when there are two staff members and they are able to interact more with the crowd by having an MC and a technical director who also helps out with crowd interaction. Some of the events on the lower end don't allow for having a second staff member because of the rate charged, but the key there is scaling the show correctly so that you aren't trying to do a full production show on a sideshow budget.

See for Yourself

In the end, it's all about what you see. A perfect place to see the game show systems that are available is at DJ trade shows like Mobile Beat's upcoming Florida DJ Show and the Mobile Beat Las Vegas events. The major players in the game show gear arena are always represented, so you can check out a variety units completely if you are considering an expansion of your business. For more info from experienced game show users, take a look at Start.ProDJ.Com, where the discussion forums feature specialized areas for Interactive DJs and Game Show Hosts.

"WHERE THE GAME SHOW REALLY SHINES IS WHEN YOU ARE ABLE TO INCORPORATE THE WHOLE SHOW ASPECT INTO IT, VERSUS JUST A QUESTION AND ANSWER GAME." —JAMIE SIMPSON, HOUSEROCKERS, PA

MAJOR GAMESHOW PLAYERS

Creative Imagineering (www.gameshowmania.com)

The first company to market game show products to the mobile DJ industry was formed by a professional mobile disc jockey, Dean Lichtenwalner. "My initial idea, which ended up as Game Show Mania, was to have something that people could interact and participate in, other than karaoke." Creative Imagineering has hardware that ranges in cost from under \$1,000 to \$5,000+.



DigiGames (www.triviaproducer.com)

Also created by a disc jockey who saw the opportunity to get more interactive and expand his offerings. Tom Dorscher, chief engineer for DigiGames says, "We have found that more and more entertainers are relying on computers for their events. A computerized game show system only makes sense, as the game show host now has total flexibility to change players' names, insert their own questions and answers, and manipulate sound effects. The software even allows the host to concentrate on his performance without being tied to the computer."



Zeecraft (www.zeecraft.com)

This company produces hardware that is very popular in the educational market, specializing in the "quizbowl" market. They have multiple options that are also perfect for the mobile entertainment arena as well. Check them out in person at the next Mobile Beat Las Vegas conference.



Mitzvahs and Beyond

By Mark Johnson

Giving the People What They Want

Mitzvahs. I've long since stayed away from these rather lucrative mobile DJ events for a number of reasons. First, I am not that flashy and physically entertaining. Second, I never developed the skills and patience to facilitate children's games and third, there are dozens of quite capable DJ companies in my New York/New Jersey area that can accommodate the needs and demands of these typically pretty elaborate productions.

The range of DJ companies that cater to Bar/Bat Mitzvahs is quite wide. At the high end, there are the \$5,000 (or more) complete productions with DJs, MCs, dancers, videographers, games, lighting, props, giveaways, contests and other items. Add any personalized items like the child's video biography, other family history videos or photos and the price goes up—as well as the expectations for everything to be nothing less than perfect.

While the financial rewards are there, they come with the responsibility to manage this once in a lifetime event.

Mitzvah Planner Resource

I came across a magazine called The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Guide (Brooklyn, NY, 718-615-2500) that I feel I should share with the readers of Mobile Beat. In it are the requisite advertisements for the high-end banquet facilities, exciting other locations like sports centers, commuter ships as well as other items to add to the event like portraits, photography and souvenirs. As for weddings, there were plenty of party planner advertisements, offering management of the complete package, from invitations through thank you notes.

Plus, there are a lot of mobile DJ ads. These aren't the standard Yellow Pages® or newspaper DJ ads with their "Music for all Occasions" headline and black and white details about their company. No, these are full-blown color, multi-page professionally done advertisements promoting the high energy and excitement that these companies can offer. Oddly enough, none focus too much on the religious side of

performing at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Perhaps that's simply not the DJ's role anymore and other people may take over those responsibilities. There are a few articles like "The History of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah" and other educational/religious items. There is an article on games that DJ's can incorporate into their performance.

The Inside Scoop

One of the articles is titled "How to Choose a DJ," which certainly piqued my interest. It's almost like seeing the test before the teacher hands it out. Here are some of the items advised when choosing a DJ:

There is an expectation for managing these larger (read: high-priced) events that you have a Web site, local advertisements, and are represented quite professionally. The prospect should visually evaluate the specified DJ during the pre-event meetings. They're not that interested in pre-packaged music sets, rather the ability to read and react to the moods of the audience during the event. A video of the DJ is almost mandatory. Behavior and participation are important. They advise meeting the DJ who will actually perform for the event. Completely itemize up front all DJs, MCs and other entertainers, as well as a hardware list, i.e. lighting and special effects that are part of the deal.

It also advises creating a DJ Checklist to review the DJ's qualifications. Some items are: Years of experience. What will the DJ wear. The ability to set up and tear down the equipment and what time is needed. To possibly visit the DJ at another event. How the DJ can contribute to their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Ask and make notes on the DJ's ability to provide music for the different times during the event, i.e. dinner, dancing, for both the adults and kids. How the DJ handles group participation events.

Equipment

Professional CD/MP3 players, wired and wireless mics, a possible cassette deck for a guest's possible song, professional speakers and amplifiers and a nice looking setup clear of wires.

It also specifically mentions to avoid a DJ whose equipment is randomly scattered on the facilities' tables. It even mentions Technics and Denon as the preferred brands for turntables. What kind of lighting is provided with the standard and "extra" packages. Any intelligent lighting or video systems? Issues regarding a meal, transportation

One of the articles is titled "How to Choose a DJ"... It's almost like seeing the test before the teacher hands it out.

and parking. Overtime availability and rate. Backup equipment, assistants and other contingencies.

This is perhaps the first time I've ever seen such information prepared for the prospects to use when evaluating different DJs for their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. In fact, most of these elements can pertain to virtually any mobile DJ event.

Surprisingly, this article didn't mention inquiring about the DJ's ability to facilitate the wide variety of games that are typically required at Mitzvahs. Perhaps the lines are being drawn more strictly these days, in that the DJ provides music, a magician will perform magic, and a separate party host will facilitate the games and other non-musical entertainment.

This publication provided a truly eye-opening view into how parents of Bar and Bat Mitzvah guests of honor may be approaching the planning of their events, especially their expectations of what a DJ should bring to the celebration. While we DJs may list what we think are our best attributes to promote our own professionalism, it's refreshing to compare our lists to those of the prospects. After all, they are the customers. ■



Mark Johnson is a long-time mobile DJ and has written for Mobile Beat for years, giving his insightful and often incisive perspective on many business and operational ideas. His articles grow out of his own experience and his observations of other DJs during his travels. Always providing an alternative view, his previous articles can be found at www.mobilebeat.com/archives.

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The Kids Are Alright

By Mike Ryan
a.k.a. Dr. Frankenstand

**Expert advice
for making youth
entertainment seem
like child's play**

If you've seen the movie *Son In Law*, starring Pauly Shore, you probably remember the roly-poly, freckle-faced little brother Zack, played by Patrick Renna.

I did a wedding recently where the bride's son was a spitting image of Zack. Towards the end of the reception the Zack-a-like started watching me work. I'm a sucker for any kid who takes an interest in DJing, so I invited him to help me with some of the announcements. I was surprised to discover he was great on the mic! I took out one of my business cards and wrote on the back: "(his name) has fulfilled the requirements to become a Junior DJ. Then I signed it. Some kids might have thought that was a silly thing, but not him. His face lit up and off he went to show the card to his mother (the bride) who caught my attention and mouthed "Thank you"! The point of this story is that sometimes kids at parties can be a pain, but other times they can be a great opportunity to endear yourself to your client. Certainly that little boy will remember the time he became a "Junior DJ." Maybe he'll grow up to be a full-fledged DJ.

Controlled Chaos

Children present a unique element at any event in which they are involved. The following are some expert views from two DJs who specialize in children's events: Joe Kahwaty of DJ Entertainers, Freehold, New Jersey and Eric Sands of Sundance Productions in San Diego, California, Bar and Bat Mitzvah specialists.

Kahwaty says because children have short attention spans, "you must keep activities as upbeat as possible." He agrees with the idea of letting certain kids on the mic: "...you might invite

If you keep them continuously surprised and challenged, they will respect you for it.

the children to be a guest DJ...the children love it, [and it] makes great photo opportunities and lasting memories for your clients, their family and friends."

Sands says, "It's all about control. If you give kids the opportunity to create chaos, they will. However, if you keep them continuously surprised and challenged, they will respect you for it, and respond to your show...They only act crazy because they need attention. You can give them the attention that they are demanding without being negative."

However, some DJs feel they have to be the star of the show with kids present; we've all seen it—they can and often do steal the limelight. Kahwaty says: "In many cases children are the life of the party but sometimes they need to be invited to participate in activities or dances. It has been my experience that if you ask them they will

listen. Often the other guests will help you get the children involved."

Tips and Tricks for Kids

KEEP 'EM BUSY. Kahwaty says "you need to keep the activities going around all the other things happening at your parties. When you are done with activities try group dances. Some adults will actually enjoy doing the same activities provide to the children." Sands suggests giving "kids a role, maybe make them judges for an activity."

PROP 'EM UP. Kahwaty uses "hula hoops, limbo stick and sometimes Buddy Walkers® for out door parties. Sands is really into props: "Yes—plenty of props. Those illuminated squeeze balls are very popular right now. Also, glow-in-the-dark items will always win their favor (no pun intended). Air instruments are always fun, and using props for contests makes



a great impact (example: jumbo inflatable microphones, sunglasses, and various wigs for lip sync contests)."

HOW LONG? HOW MANY? What's the ideal timeframe for kid's parties and how many is too many kids? Kahwaty has a "three hour minimum with no max." He charges an additional fee for over 25 children. Sands says four hours is "maxed out" and at his Bar/Bat Mitzvahs the number of kids ranges from 30 to 80.

HELPERS AND/OR DANCERS. Kahwaty doesn't use dancers but does require additional assistance for each group of 25 children." Sands likes a helping hands: "Absolutely! Although you can call them dancers, or pumpers, or motivators...you need to have staff there to help execute your commands. One dancer for every 30 to 40 guests (kids and adults) is my rule of thumb."

ARE DJS GLORIFIED BABYSITTERS? Kahwaty says, "If the shoe fits wear it. I'm not ashamed to say I am a glorified baby sitter. Money talks!" Regarding parents he recommends: they "should know beforehand what they are getting into. Explain some of the activities you plan to do at their event. You will not have any problems unless you don't have the command of the activities you are planning to perform. If customers have any unreasonable demands, there are plenty of DJs they can call." Sands feel "parents don't really care how you get the job done. As long as you keep them occupied and entertained at the opportune times during the party."

WHEN GOOD KIDS GO BAD. Have you had to deal with out of control kids? Sands relates one incident: "In the early '90s, we got a bit rough with one kid who was trying to steal our CDs. Parents got mad and threatened to hire an attorney in response to our mishandling of this kid. We were forced to write a letter of apology to the family."

"There will always be troublemakers," he adds. "Don't alienate them...but embrace them into the party."

KID PARTIES ARE WORTH MORE. Exclusively child-attended parties require a lot more effort on the part of an entertainer. Are they worth charging more? Kahwaty says absolutely and recommends adding "a prize package (with) fun inflatables, leis, hats, sunglasses, etc. The prize packages you sell will generate much more business for you; you can take that to the bank." Sands agrees, he charges "almost twice as much for Bar/Bat Mitzvah parties than for all other parties." He feels that "to the hosts of the party, it's worth every penny." ■

Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio. He also DJ'd on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike and is also the inventor owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands! Mike also works part time as a DMC tour guide. He has been the President of the San Diego Professional Tour Guide Association, a board member of his local NACE chapter and is currently the secretary of the San Diego Chapter of the ADJA.

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SCHOOL HOUSE ROCK

By Jake Feldman

HOW TO ROCK THE HOUSE, IN HIGH (SCHOOL) STYLE

Often in life, the most rewarding experiences come with the most work. It seems the more a person works; the more they are rewarded with pay, satisfaction, and piece of mind. As many businessmen will note, there is really is nothing more soul-satisfying than a job well done. In the DJ world, large school dances are the closest some of us get to being rock stars and playing in front of thousands—all the while living out our life-long dreams. The feeling of 3,000-plus people singing the song, swaying and dancing to the music, and thousands of watts of sound rippling through the room is, in my humble opinion, unmatched by any pharmaceutical or recreational drug available.

Professional Production Process

Disc jockeys have been filling up their off nights with school functions since the inception of the industry. Few, however, give the school market the respect and time that it deserves to make each event a success, particularly the large ones. There are some who really take the time to create the production values (sound/stage/video/lights), and there are some who treat these shows as a way to make a quick buck without all of the planning involved in a wedding or mitzvah. If you are wondering why your school client list and return bookings are lagging, it's because your competition realized a long time ago that the days of simply showing up and playing at major school dances were over.

To start with, any entertainment company that does not have a solid relationship with all the sponsors (students, faculty and parents) probably will not last for long. Little things ARE big things in the school market just as in the wedding market. Confirmation calls, edited music, timeliness, and general courtesy will

go a long way to building your reputation with a school.

Secondly, being prepared is key. For all of my major events, I request meetings at the venue with students, faculty and venue staff to go over our plans for the evening. It is also important (if not in person) to at least meet by phone with the photographer and designer for the evening, to try to anticipate any and all "bugs" that may arise during the event. It is also important that if there is an event theme, that you coordinate with each entity to stay true to the vision of your ultimate bosses—the students.

Once you have met with your students, faculty and staff, you have developed a relationship that reassures everyone involved that you are a professional and will do everything in your power to make the occasion a success. After all, that is the reason why you were hired.

In addition, viewing the venue also helps you determine the amount of production that is necessary for your event. It's wise to ask your students what their vision of the production is—from "low key" to "high tech." For those of you playing the home game, this is the perfect opportunity to up-sell your client (on production and interactive features, such as video and textlive) while they

are at the venue and excited about the prospect of something new and exciting.

Thirdly, it is important to allow as much direct input as possible into the music that will be played. For all of my school events, I allow direct access to all students via the DJ Intelligence online system—allowing pre-event requests in a neat format. At my events, I then play the danceable requests, leaving off selections that will "tank" or be too vulgar. It is imperative to purchase and become familiar with any new music that has been requested. The students are counting on you to be their entertainment "tour guide" for the evening, and if you don't know the way, the party can get lost rather quickly.

Next, you must call and confirm all of your plans and keep a lookout for anything that may have changed since your last conversation or meeting. Open communication will alleviate most of the pressure you may have put on yourself by confirming your role in the event. Talking with your sponsors a week or two before your event will also clear up any



miscommunications that may have occurred since the first meeting.

Additionally, one or two weeks may be needed to kick start the process of getting paid from the schools. Different school districts have different processes and some may require a physical signature on not only an invoice, but an "independent contractor's form." Whatever the case, just make sure no one forgot about you.

Fully Equipped to Rock

When your clients expect professional services, they also expect professional equipment. All equipment that is used should be attractive—sonically and aesthetically. All speakers should be aimed, calibrated, and elevated if necessary, and should be properly amplified, not overdriven. A good concept to embrace is the idea that if it needs to be overdriven, then you need more. No matter how good they are, or what brand of speakers you're using, a single pair will not do for a large group of people. Sound, in its finest form, embraces the philosophy of even distribution. Distribution entails careful planning and a slight fringe overlapping of signals designed to increase quality and decrease distortion and destruction of equipment. In other words, your system, at show volume, should be peaked at about 60% of its total capabilities to be able to handle the variance of signals.

Sound is the key technical aspect of a show. Without sound, there is no show—no reason for you to be there and get paid. As a result of this, your setup time should be dependent on getting your sound right first. From there, you can work on

**THE STUDENTS ARE
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the window dressing of lights and the wow factor of video.

Lighting can make or break a show, but is not as system-critical as sound is, and should be viewed as an art form that compliments the science of sound. A basic light show may seem better for your budget, but a large, innovative light show will get you referrals.

The new norm in lights is, without question, DMX fixtures. If you're not rocking DMX, you may be rocking the house, but you're not rocking the future, as your light show will remain basic and become stale. With DMX,

preset patterns and chases can be crafted before each "run" or "tour" of schools and changed for the next run, making your production seem more like a traveling rock show than a discount bin at your local DJ supply store.

Keeping It Real

Finally, and most importantly...your performance. Without question, this area is what every show depends on, and on which return business is based. It is important that you feel the energy of the room, amplify it and channel it back into your show. Have enthusiasm for what you do, but DO NOT be phony. There are few people in this world that can do what we do and be truly successful at it; if you're faking it, it will be felt by the audience. Real professionals NEVER have off nights. The show must go on; the crowds of young people do not care about your personal life. They came to have a good time and escape their regular lives for a few hours.

Schools are a significant form of income and even professional enjoyment, but also a serious responsibility. You are providing a lasting impression for potential life-long fans of your work, who may potentially utilize your services at every future milestone event that necessitates them. Above all, you are providing memories that will last a lifetime and a reputation that will define you. ■

Beside being a youth event specialist and logistics manager for BC Productions in Des Moines, IA, Jake Feldman serves as coordinator for the print and online versions of the Mobile Beat/ProDJ.com gear guide.

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Miniscule Digital Tools

By Dan Walsh

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NewSoft WMS 100 Image

Mobile DJs are constantly on the lookout for ways to hide or even eliminate all those many cables for audio, lighting and video that they have to carry around with them. The fewer cables you have running around, the quicker your set-up becomes and the better your rig looks, however big or small it may be.

With this in mind, wireless technology is being applied in a variety of ways to

entertainment gear. In the visual realm, one hot new development is wireless connection of video output from computers to projectors. The first step in this direction is represented by products like the WMS 100 Image Wireless Projector Adapter from NewSoft (www.newsoftinc.com).

The unit is just slightly larger than a deck of cards, with a 4-inch long rotatable, flexible antenna. The WMS 100 uses 802.11 a/b/g standard Wi-Fi technology incorporated into a hardware receiver and Presto! WMS 2.5 sending software to help you connect a Wi-Fi enabled computer to almost any projector using VGA or XGA.

The unit's high frame transfer rate (15fps), provides excellent transmission of still images and PowerPoint® presentations—perfect for those photo slideshows of wedding or high school memories. The unit allows “one-to-many” functionality, so you could send these images to multiple projectors in a larger venue.

I was impressed with the ease of use of the WMS 100. When I went to use it for the first time, I simply plugged the unit into power and to a projector (power cable included, video cable not), loaded the software, went through a quick install, and I was up and running in less than five minutes, with nary a glitch. I made a point to wander with my laptop all over the large auditorium where I was using it, and never had

any difficulty with the wireless signal. In fact, I ended up running a slideshow with my computer on the opposite side of the room from where my projector and screen were set up, at least 200 feet away. Of course, putting a few walls between myself and the adapter caused the signal to deteriorate, but its performance was on par with that of the best wireless routers and repeaters I have worked with.

Not only is the WMS 100 perfect for performance applications, it is, of course, an excellent tool for business presentations. Now, instead of your laptop being tethered to a projector, thus limiting you to a certain area, the wireless adapter allows you to make a presentation from anywhere in the room.

The WMS 100 can handle limited full-motion video, but unfortunately is not up to the task of a complete VJ show demanding high-quality projection. But have no fear: NewSoft is set to debut a new unit (WMS 200) soon that WILL make this kind of wireless projection possible. Look for it in stores soon.

I tested the PC version of the software for my review. NewSoft recently released a free download for Mac users that will run on both Power PC and Intel-based Macs.

MSRP: \$279.95 – WWW.NEWSOFTINC.COM

Toshiba TDP-FF1AU Projector

Often when the effort is made to make some essential piece of technology smaller, the quality or amount of functionality decreases. Not so with Toshiba's tiny TDP-FF1AU Projector. And not only is this unit one of the smallest, if not THE smallest digital video projector available, it is equipped with a notebook-style Lithium-Ion battery for completely mobile use.

The TDP-FF1AU is built with an energy-efficient LED light source that has the potential for up to 10,000 hours of use, and does not heat up the projector, eliminating powering up and cool down time (no fan needed), and increasing battery life. The unit includes computer, video and audio inputs, headphone output and a convenient USB port for digital photo viewing or PC-free presentations (more on that below).

The first thing I wondered was whether a unit this small could throw enough light to be useful. The answer was, yes it can. Its specs rate it at 400 Lux, with native SVGA 800 x 600 resolution and a contrast ratio of 1500:1. In practical terms, I was able to get a nicely crisp and bright projection in a relatively well lit room. When I turned the room lighting down, the image was as bright or brighter than the standard size portable projector I was used to using.

After a very short charging period, I was ready to take the FF1 out to use without a power connection. Like the adapter mentioned above, this compact, untethered unit can make set-up quick and mobility even better, not to mention reducing the eye-strain from unsightly cables. It also features a credit card sized remote control that drops easily in a pocket. I used the projector for a number of presentations without needing to go back for a recharge, seeming to go beyond the advertised 2-hour battery life.

You can even use the FF-1 without a laptop using the unit's USB Type A connector, you can plug in a flash memory drive and run a simple presentation or slideshow, after first saving it as a series of JPEG files.

At its maximum size of about 68 inches diagonal, the projected image was still crisp enough, and the projector responsive enough to run full video. Thus, this little wonder would be a perfect way to extend your video show to multiple screens.

Plus, along with the obvious DJ applications, the TDP-FF1AU is perfect for business presentations. With this in mind, Toshiba provides a foldable 23-inch diagonal display screen and a carrying case that fits the projector, all cables and battery charger, AND the foldable screen. With this tool in hand, you can walk into a room, set up projector and screen with your notebook computer, and play a full-on video presentation, all within minutes. The complete mobility of it is impressive, in and of itself. It might be just the edge you need to differentiate yourself from the competition, especially on those lucrative corporate gigs. ■

MSRP: \$699 - WWW.TOSHIBA.COM

Eye On Video & Lighting News

Positive Projection

Da-Lite Screen Company, Inc. has announced the introduction of the Heavy Duty Fast-Fold® Deluxe portable screen. This series of large screens features a sturdy 3.5" x 1.25" aluminum frame with snap latch hinges for simple, quick set up and tear down. The Heavy Duty Fast-Fold® Deluxe is available in sizes from 7' x 9' to 16' x 27'-6" and is customizable upon request. The screens come standard with a silver anodized frame but are also available with a black frame finish. All screens up to 16' high are seamless. Screen surfaces include Da-Mat, Da-Tex, High Contrast Da-Tex, Pearlescent, Cinema Vision and Dual Vision.

In addition to its durable construction,

Da-Lite's Heavy Duty Fast-Fold® Deluxe screen with Da-Mat fabric is now a foldable black-backed material. This exclusive feature allows for the portability of a Fast-Fold® screen with the superior image quality and opacity of a black backed material. For more info on this and other Da-Lite screens, check out www.da-lite.com.



Get the LED Out

Providing LED screens for both indoor and outdoor use, LED Lite Vision displays promise

high-quality image resolution, color definition and brightness. Modular technology allows the possibility of a great variety of display sizes, each one with different image resolution technologies, according to its use and requirements. These possibilities include displays for a wide variety of events. The use of SMD LED display technology enables very wide viewing angles and great uniformity even at short distance.

LED Lite Vision Outdoor line includes displays in different image resolution and sizes: 10mm, 16mm, 20mm, 25mm. The Indoor line can find use in spaces like exhibition halls, auditoriums, etc., and comes in four different resolutions 6mm, 7.62mm, 10mm, 12mm.



Soft on DMX

If you are looking for DMX interface and control solutions, as well as some good practical info on how to use the digital lighting protocol, head over to DmxSoft.com. There you can compare and purchase DMX software and interfaces online, and learn from reference material at "DMX University." - www.dmxsoft.com

A Show on the Road to Musical Success

By Anthony B. Barthel

DJ Russ Harris realizes his dream of recording as well as spinning the tunes

Many DJs have the dream of being on the other side of the music scene and being famous for creating the tunes they're playing rather than playing the tunes. At least one mobile DJ has accomplished that with his hit "Drums in the Club." And with an album forthcoming, DJ Russ Harris is going to be busy touring in clubs and venues all over. But the interesting part of any dream is the story of what happens once it becomes reality, which is why Mobile Beat spoke with Russ Harris about touring, DJing and more.

Performing and Creating

Harris has been a mobile DJ in the Chicago area for 20 years now, starting out at the ripe old age of 14. Even during college, Harris continued to practice the DJ craft, working in the club scene. But all along, songs were bouncing around in the back of his head that he hoped to share with the world.

It wasn't until about four years ago, when Harris' mix featuring Pink Floyd's "Another Brick in the Wall" started to get popular, that he got attention for being the man behind the music as well as the man playing it for audiences at weddings and parties. To get the Pink Floyd remix into record pools, Harris used his own money, but the ball started rolling from there.

From there he did a mix of Huey Lewis's "I Want a New Drug," but this time he contacted



Harris has been a mobile DJ in the Chicago area for 20 years now...But all along, songs were bouncing around in the back of his head that he hoped to share with the world.

Huey Lewis' management and they helped him get pieces of the song.

After success with those songs, Harris began to work on crafting his own tunes. And where does one get inspiration for these works? "I've been writing goofy songs since I was a kid." He wrote a song in 5th grade that was a parody of "Thriller" but was called "Miller" and was about a guy who drank too much beer. Now, Harris has a full album of songs on the horizon with *Ear Therapy*, set to release later this year.

Managing to Stay Mobile

So, with a music career now part of his future, does that mean Harris plans to chuck his successful DJ company? Not at all. In fact, he says, "I'm not above doing the normal mobile jobs. 15-20 years from now that's still where my bread and butter will be." So how does one manage a successful tour and a successful mobile DJ operation? The Internet!

About five years ago, Harris's Show On The Road Productions joined a lot of DJ companies in trying out a new web management tool known as DJWebmin (www.djwebmin.com). This system allows for the complete management of a DJ

business through web-based tools that help track sales, leads, events, performances and much more. This has been a very good tool for Show On The Road Productions.

"We have a nice system here, where everybody knows what they're doing," reports Harris. "90 percent of the business is run from DJWebmin. I could be in any part of the country and log into the account and know what's going on. If there's a client that needs a phone call from me I can simply call up all the details (on the Internet).

"I've developed the business to be a well-greased machine. When I go to Vegas for the [Mobile Beat] conference, all I have to do is call in once a day and check for messages, but even those are usually texted right to my phone."

The Web is fine for a small company (you might be thinking) but how big is this operation? Well, Show On The Road Productions boasts 12 systems and does about 800-900 performances per year.

"On a typical Saturday in the summer," Harris says, "where there are 12 systems going out, it's great—we just pull up the info on the computer and everything's all set. Ever since we switched over to Webmin 4 to 5 years ago, it takes a lot of stress off us. The DJs can log on and deal with their clients. The office managers handle the details, for example, the party favors or lighting."

Using DJWebmin, Harris's staff of DJs can log into their own sub accounts and see what is ahead of them, where they will be working, what the details of the performances are and much

more. It makes managing a large DJ company like Show On The Road Productions from anywhere that has Internet access very doable, whether it's in Harris's own home or from across the country.

Harris still does weddings himself but his favorite types of performances are proms, with large video prom shows being at the top of his list.

It's All About the Tunes, Dude

Even music production has changed thanks to the Internet. While it used to be that you had to get a bunch of people to sit in a studio together to create a project, nowadays that's not the case. For example, for "Drums in the Club," his singer, Carrie, simply e-mailed her vocals to Harris, who then mixed everything together with Cakewalk's Sonar recording software. Another friend recorded the drums and e-mailed that file.

"If I had the tools 'back then' that I have now, I'd be further along in my music career today."

The tour to support the record consists of Harris spinning at a club for 2-3 hours with live singers providing the vocals. He admits flatly, "I can't sing."

When Harris was at the Winter Music Conference in Miami his label, Crescendo Muzik, paid him to perform at a local venue with DJ Carrie and Bam Bam Buddha. It turns out that representatives from Coca Cola were in the house that night and the deal was inked for Harris to tour.

Of course the tour will promote the new album, *Ear Therapy*. When the title was chosen, it was hard to believe that nobody else had used it before. Harris is like most artists who have already laid down the tracks, put in the hard work, and now have to sit and wait a year—or more—while lawyers, marketers and others spend time making decisions and money while the album waits. It was only a week before our interview that he saw the artwork for the cover, with the actual release still months away.

"As an artist you want it now, but that's just not how it works," says the creative DJ.

Coming full circle from creation to performance, we had to find out if the Show On The Road Productions DJ staff ever played Harris' tunes. He reported that The company's DJs will play the song—if they get a request for it. Sometimes impressed clients will laugh with surprise, because they knew the song and now they know that their DJ is the one who made it. ■

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AMERICAN DISC JOCKEY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 4



SERVING UP A GRAND SLAM FOR THE CATERERS

By Larry Williams

The ADJA continues its efforts to influence the catering industry, as they in turn influence those who hire DJs

Last year, the ADJA really stepped out from behind the curtain to be a sponsor of NACE (National Association of Catering Executives).

The Phoenix chapter blazed a clear trail into new territory for the ADJA. They helped show NACE that DJs are every bit the professionals that event and catering professionals need in their facilities. They opened many doors that made this year's efforts possible. They set a pretty high bar for 2007 to exceed.

Things Take Off in Houston

At the recent NACE Educational Conference in Houston, Texas, the ADJA pulled out all the stops to impress upon the attendees the value and distinct difference that quality entertainment can provide. ADJA members Roy Dueitt, Paul Olsen and

Lisa Wallrath all took major roles in seeing that everything happened as planned, without a hitch. This allowed the National Directors to focus on collaborating with NACE members and leadership to build a better relationship for both organizations.

In discussions with them, everytime we needed a positive example of ADJA professionalism, we had to look no further than a local member or leader who was living the vision statement, "When we work together, imagine what we can do!" We had many great conversations with event



professionals from around the country, covering a variety of topics.

One area of special interest centered around the perception by guests that the DJ works for the venue and is not independently hired. Most were taken aback by that and once it was explained to them, they seemed more determined to review their referral policies more closely. Many commented that they are going to start looking for ADJA members exclusively for their lists. We then took this opportunity to review and highlight the "new" ADJA Code of Conduct.

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DJ insurance was another topic that was discussed. More and more event facilities are understanding the value of an insured DJ versus one with no insurance. So if you don't have your DJ liability insurance, now is a great time to get it.

Demonstrating Professionalism

The ADJA provided nearly all the musical entertainment for the conference. On the final night they hired the services of a live band. Due to complaints about the volume from the band, we feel that next year we will be in a great position to secure that spot as well. We also provided ADJA professionals for all their seminars and sessions, giving their educational content a more professional image as we warmed up the crowds for the presentations and acted as the spokespersons for NACE.

The local Houston chapter really pulled out all the stops. By request of NACE, they transformed one off premise event into a

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ASSOCIATION NEWS

NACE Alliance

In its continuing efforts to expand strategic partnerships with national trade organizations, the ADJA is pleased to announce a milestone alliance and specially negotiated discount price on corporate memberships with NACE (National Association of Catering Executives). This will give members expanded access to other event professionals in their marketplace. Visit the "members only" area of the ADJA website for more details.

MB All Star Show to Be Sponsored

The ADJA will establish a greater positive presence at the upcoming 12th Annual Mobile Beat DJ Show & Conference in Las Vegas, by co-sponsoring the popular DJ All Star Show, this year featuring Freedom Williams (C & C Music Factory) and Tone Loc. This sponsorship, in addition to their representation at the conference trade show and the annual association "national meeting," will serve as a positive affirmation of the ADJA's commitment to support the major events that move the mobile DJ industry forward.

For the past several years, the ADJA has continually increased its involvement at the Mobile Beat DJ Show and Conference

in Las Vegas—the nation's most prominent industry event for mobile DJs. This year the ADJA has again stepped up to the plate to co-sponsor the highly anticipated DJ All Star Show, featuring Freedom Williams (C & C Music Factory) and Tone Loc. This co-sponsorship, along with trade show representation and their annual "national meeting," will increase the visibility of the ADJA and help cement its reputation as the nation's finest trade organization for mobile DJs.

Benefits Update



In its efforts to bring members even more money-saving benefits, the ADJA has partnered with **Enterprise Car Rentals** to be able to offer ADJA

members savings on Enterprise's already low rates. See the members-only area at www.adja.org to find out more information on this exciting program.

A new low-fee merchant card system has also been arranged. The ADJA has partnered with **First National Merchant Solutions**, one of



the nation's leading card processing centers. Now members have a variety of options to choose from as they decide on the best, most flexible methods for taking credit cards in their businesses. Details on this program can also be found in the members-only area at the ADJA website.

PS...Don't forget about the 2% cashback leasing program and the fleet vehicle purchase program, as well as the ADJA's educational programs.

The ADJA is pleased to announce a new money-saving opportunity for our members. The organization has teamed up with the **Mens Wearhouse** to offer you an awesome deal on a Tuxedo. Throughout the year, Mens Wearhouse, the nation's largest men's formalwear retailer, adds new lines of formalwear and discontinues others. Many of these tuxes have never been worn or if rented, only once or twice. All are in like-new condition. (I actually have several of them now. — Dr. Drax)

The Men's Wearhouse carefully selects those tuxes that it places into its rental liquidation pool. These are the best of the best. Many designer names are to be found. All are high-quality tuxedos priced so affordably that every member will want to buy—yes I said "buy"—2 or 3.

With this tremendous savings, you can now update your tux yearly or even more

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CATERERS

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full-blown, high-energy nightclub, complete with all the trimmings. They even created a customized, choreographed routine to "Sexyback" called "NACE Is Back." Through their efforts, ADJA provided music at all the meals and refreshment breaks throughout the day. They championed our cause by dedicated effort and tirelessly worked to make sure that the ADJA was always represented in the best light. Rob Snyder was instrumental in coordinating our efforts between NACE Houston and the Houston chapter of the ADJA. His efforts resulted in a very smooth flow of events. He made sure that we had everyone on the same page and that we had an ADJA representative wherever they might be needed. He did a super job. Bryan Foley was also there supporting our efforts. ADJA President Dr. Drax worked closely with NACE National Officers to see that the ADJA logo was prominent at every venue and every opportunity.

The ADJA really came out of obscurity with NACE at this conference. We were thanked from the podium at literally every event. That could only happen as a result of the outstanding efforts of the Houston Chapter. Those chapter members really stood up and made us all proud. Next time you see or talk to one of them give them a huge "high five" for knocking this one out of the park.

A NACE Response

Here is a comment from one NACE delegate, Andy Ebon: "The ADJA did a superior job of representing its membership on all fronts at the NACE Educational Conference in Houston. Speaking as a past NACE National Board Member, and a former mobile DJ, I can say, without hesitation, that the ADJA presence in the NACE Marketplace Tradeshow, its entertainment value at various events, and professional introductions at seminars were all home runs. Individual NACE members are bringing home an exemplary impression of ADJA members for the second straight year. If local members impress them with

the same professionalism, it will help cement the ADJA as the industry leader!" More can be read on his blog at www.WeddingMarketing.biz.

Dr. Drax was also named to the NACE Business Partners Steering Committee to better facilitate the relationships between NACE and its business partners. One goal was to create a toolbox for local chapters to understand the business partner program and to better interact with ADJA local chapters around the country. ADJA will also be helping NACE refine their local chapter development kit. This will further cement our relationship of increasing value to NACE.

For those who have not been to a NACE event, each meal, rest break or evening event has a specific theme, with specific requirements. Our Houston chapter came through with flying colors as they worked to not only select music that matched the theme, but video and other entertainment features. To those who sacrificed their time and talents so that ADJA could shine bright, we give a heartfelt "Thank you!" You ROCK! ●

Mentorship Program *Launched*

Hello!

More than two years ago, I wanted to increase the educational opportunities for members of the ADJA. To that end we added options in your profile to show interest in such an effort. As often happens, those in leadership often come to similar conclusions. In a conversation with Manny Otero, I expressed my interest in a mentorship program, as it turned out, he also had something like that on his mind. So the synergy of the timing springboarded this program into life. Manny set off on a mission to develop a program suitable for DJs. In Vegas at our National Meeting, we announced the mentorship program, and we officially kicked off the program, effective August 1, 2007. This serves as yet another example of ADJA leadership in the industry. We announce we are going to do something—and then we do it. This bold step to pioneer a mentorship program for DJs is just another example of how we are implementing our vision statement: “When we work together, imagine what we can do.” It is now my pleasure to introduce to you the ADJA Mentorship Program Coordinator, Mr. Manny Otero.

DJ Dr. Drax

ADJA National President & Executive Director

Greetings ADJA members, my name is Manny Otero and I am the owner of InSane Diego Productions in San Diego, CA. It is my honor and privilege to serve as your ADJA Mentorship Program Coordinator. I would like to take a few moments to talk to you about the ADJA Mentorship program and how it will work.

“A mentor is never on your payroll”

Prince, 2004 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction speech

Truer words were never spoken about the true meaning of mentorship.

The Program

On August 1st, the ADJA launched its Mentorship Program. The program is designed to enhance all the Business, Performance, Technical and Specialty skill sets of our members in a structured and formalized program. This will be a more in-depth approach than basic information sharing between peers in a chat room, or group discussions at local chapter meetings. The various aspects of the program are Business (Sales, Marketing, Management, Operations, Multi-Ops), Performance (Weddings, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, Corporate, Schools), Technical (Software, Audio, Video, Lighting), and Specialty (Cultural). The

program is open to all active ADJA members, and best of all, the program is FREE.

You can find a Mentor or Protégé within your community, but you don't have to limit yourself to your own local markets. With the advent of free long distance, email, and even video teleconferencing, you can have a Mentor or Protégé from anywhere in the country. ADJA members seeking a Mentor or Protégé can apply through the monthly Mentorship Program newsletter that will be released by the home office, or you can contact potential mentor directly.

How It Works

If an ADJA member would like a Mentor to guide them, they contact a potential Mentor in one of the Subject Matter Areas (Business, Performance, Technical, and Specialty) and ask if they will be a Mentor for them. Then that Mentor contacts the Program Coordinator (that's me), and I get the ball rolling for both parties. Once agreed upon by both parties, you fill out a few sheets of paper and begin your Mentor-Protégé relationship. Basic Mentoring relationships can last between just a few months and even a few years. It all depends on the both of you. I will be following up with both parties to see how things work out (and to compile some data, of course).

The ADJA website will have a Mentorship Program area available to our membership to download files you can use for administrative purposes and loaded with information for both Mentors and Protégés alike. That way, if you're not sure you can be a Mentor or a Protégé, maybe something in the Mentorship Program area can shed some light on the program and answer questions you may have.

What Is a Mentor?

A Mentor is an advisor and guide. He or she is a subject matter expert who can point the Protégé in the right direction, help set goals, make suggestions, and follow up on the results. Mentors are trusted agents who will dedicate time and effort to make sure Protégés have achieved their goals. A Mentor is not a supervisor, director, or boss and like Prince said, “A mentor is not on your payroll.”

What Is a Protégé?

A Protégé is a person who desires knowledge and skills to better themselves and is willing to dedicate the time to do so. A Protégé seeks out the Mentor, and they begin a Mentor-Protégé relationship.



A Protégé establishes goals, formulates a plan, implements it, and follows up with the mentor. Then the Mentor and Protégé review the results and discuss feedback for the time when the Protégé becomes a Mentor.

Why Mentorship? Why Now?

The ADJA is in the process of branding our professional organization to raise the bar on the services we provide to our customers and to enhance the public perception of mobile disc jockeys. A program such as this will contribute to that overall goal. A program to share information and ideas will not only enhance our organization to recruit new members, but provide yet another benefit to our current members.

Background

Myself and Ken Day (Owner of Movin' Tunes and author of Mastering the Master Of Ceremonies), came up with the idea of a Mentorship Program for the ADJA by simply drawing from our backgrounds. We are both Navy veterans, and have been involved in setting up mentoring programs for sailors for a combined 20 years. Now we know that mobile DJs are not sailors, but the basic foundation and principles are the same: establish the relationship, set up goals, implement, guide, follow up, and review. Ken and I are also a few of the founding members of the San Diego ADJA Chapter. I am a former Navy Master Training Specialist, Navy Aviation Safety Specialist, SH-60B and MH-60R Curriculum Model Manager and have administrated local command Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist and Mentor training programs.

I am looking forward to hearing from you and establishing these relationships around the country, and more importantly, I look forward to serving you as your Mentorship Coordinator. ●

Regards,

Manny Otero - ADJA Mentorship Coordinator
mentorship1@adja.org

The Way to the "Why"

By Bryan J. Dodge

Motivation is "how-focused" and inspiration is "why-focused."

I would like to discuss some of the keys that will keep you "why-focused" during your journey with "The Good Life Rules." These keys can help you become invaluable in the marketplace and to the people who are closest to you. Friends don't walk away from relationships with friends they value. Men and women don't divorce spouses whom they cherish. Keep in mind that the qualities I'll discuss don't usually reside in us, fully developed. Rather, we must nurture the good seeds if we expect them to grow. So the questions we need to answer become obvious. For example, what makes someone so valuable that their employer will promote them rather than let them go? What makes someone so valuable that many of their friends consider them their "best friend?" What makes someone so valuable that their spouse will always adore them?

A person possesses two qualities that will outshine others. Their value is priceless, and we almost always underestimate them. The qualities I'm talking about are truthfulness and kindness. In 2002, a survey reported that 74 percent of the 12,000 high school seniors surveyed admitted that they had recently cheated on exams. So where does The Good Life get lost? People don't just all of a sudden get to high school and start cheating. It all starts somewhere. Parents, when your kids answer the phone at home, do you tell them to say you're not home? Kids pay attention to what we do more often than what we try to teach them with words.

Honesty is hard to come by in today's world. I have found that when most of us think of someone who is dishonest, we usually think of other people and rarely ourselves. People are dishonest for many

reasons. Some do it to promote themselves, to make people think higher of them, or to raise themselves above others for a selfish reason. Some do it to protect themselves from the truth. Most often, however, people are dishonest to manipulate the thoughts or actions of others.



People presume that because dishonesty often brings short-term advantages, it does not have long-term consequences; but time always tells the truth. The problem is that we lack enough patience to allow time to speak to us. We have created this instant-gratification lifestyle that keeps us focused on how to have this, how to get that, and how to achieve success. In other words, "I'll take good care of me first, and if I have any time or money left at the end of my day, week, month, year, or life, I will give the leftovers to others." When I speak to any group of people, my greatest desire is to remind those in the room not to leave truthfulness and kindness out of their choices. Remember the old saying: the face you wear for the first 40 years is the one you were born with, the face you wear the second 40 years is the one you lived by.

Why do people put aside The Good Life for dishonesty and unkindness? The answer is very simple: it is human nature to act in our own self-interest when confronted with any negative situation. I'm often asked "Why is it so easy to lie these days?" My response to that is "It's not any easier to lie now than it used to be; it's just easier to justify the lie." We have to be brutally honest with the person looking back at us in the mirror if we want to have The Good Life because it is built into our system to focus first on our own needs and desires.

What gives us the right to have The Good Life is that we have the opportunity to make our choices only after considering our response to a challenging situation, instead of always having a knee-jerk reaction. We can pause between what happens to us and what we do about it. That pause is what allows us to be different. The benefit of kindness is that it allows us to set aside our personal needs and desires long enough to focus our attention on the needs of others who depend on us. If we truly understood how many people in our lives depend on us, it would get us up earlier in the day, and keep us focused with an energy that we never knew we had.

Remember, those people who focus on the "how" in life always end up working for those that focus on the "why." And always remember that nothing in life is really going to change until you change...and once you change, everything changes.

I will leave you with one last thought. We all make mistakes in life, but the biggest mistake is if we choose to focus on yesterday's mistakes and bring them into tomorrow opportunities. If we let them go, we will grow. And that is what I wish for you the most in life, because, if you grow, everyone close to you will grow as well. And that is the true "why." ●

Finding Focus within the Vortex

By Harry Beckwith

In this age of faster, faster, faster, how do you explain baseball, and all those spectators watching—for two-and-a-half hours?

Perhaps even more surprisingly, how do you explain 300 people listening to a speaker on a stage for two hours, without averting their eyes? Now explore that further, and study the faces of those people. They look completely engaged and utterly content. Why? Because people so rarely experience these moments of single focus on a simple thing, and that feeling—our Zen-like moment of connection to one thing—delights them.

Manic Multitasking

Consider our constant alternative: enduring the barrage of words and images. Watch CNN financial news, for example. A dark-suited anchor person is talking—fairly quickly. Meanwhile, words like "Dow drops on IBM earnings report" race across the bottom of the screen. At the top of your screen, abbreviations and numbers race by, too, showing the up-to-that-second prices of the most active stocks. You spot the time in the upper right hand corner, the temperature in the left, and sometimes a list of upcoming stories on the right—viewing as multitasking.

Meanwhile, you're scanning your local newspaper and checking your voice mails, while Norah Jones sings in the background and your daughter croons in the foreground, "Can you play with me now?" After you're done, go check golf on the CBS website. On just the portion of that site that fits your screen, there are 59 different links you can hit. If you want to check the scores for the Masters, you notice there are at least two links to "scoreboard." Is one scoreboard perhaps more detailed than the other? Maybe there's some good information on one of those links. But how can you know...or even know you've noticed all the links that might interest you?



Welcome to the Age of Way Too Much

And what is the almost inevitable result of too much information screaming for our attention? But of course. When did you first hear of "attention deficit disorder"—and why

Creatively Challenged?

was it not more than 15 years ago? Was there no ADD in 1980? Or was it just not an epidemic yet?

What caused the epidemic? Did our species suddenly start selecting for a gene that predisposes humans to deficient attention? Or did the world change, and the cascades of images and words so overwhelm so many that ADD became not just a diagnosis, but a description of our culture?

Overcoming the Overload

In a world of people who cannot concentrate, how do you get and keep their attention? Ask baseball, and then ask the speaker. They have three critical things in common.

The first is pace; rather than the allegro pace of modern life, baseball and the speaker move more at the rhythm of a lullaby. As the term implies, each “lulls” you into attention.

The game and the speaker are pictures of simplicity. The pitcher throws, the batter swings; just follow the ball and you can follow the game. The speaker reduces his images to one (himself) and no more than one additional one: a phone, an orange, a chair used as a prop. You don’t need to work to focus your attention; it’s clear where to put it. You are blissfully, delightfully undistracted.

The game and the speaker manage to compel the attention of their audiences, and the audience’s reaction isn’t “Can you speed this up?” Unsaid, but expressed from the content that their faces and entire bodies convey, is “Thanks!”

And finally, each is a story. Baseball, in fact, is a collection of them. Can Jarret return from that painful surgery? Can the Cardinals overcome the death of their young relief pitcher? Can Dave endure whatever has thrown him into his 0-for-21 slump? Will the new kid from up north finally achieve his dreams, and ours for him?

The skilled speaker does not speak, but weaves a collection of stories whose context makes us understand. The ordinary speaker describes or explains, but the spellbinder demonstrates, with stories... and we sit, riveted, as human beings always have in the presence of stories well-told. Slow it down, make it simple, weave a story. All of that will help you cut through the clutter, so much of which is of our own making. ●

By Peter Merry

In the last few decades, our society has adopted new, more “politically correct” ways of saying things about those who may be less fortunate than others.

No one is ever referred to as a drunk or a junkie anymore, they are merely chemically addicted. No one ever talks about illegal aliens anymore, just undocumented workers. And no one is ever referred to as crippled or handicapped anymore, they are merely physically challenged.

In the last few months, I have become convinced that our industry (the wedding entertainment industry at large) has a malady that would be best described in such politically correct jargon as “creatively challenged.” Allow me to explain...

Missing the Point

When I unveiled my new book, *The Best Wedding Reception...Ever!* at the Las Vegas Mobile Beat Show, I shared several examples of creative moments that were uniquely developed for specific couples, in an effort to encourage other wedding DJs to start thinking more creatively about ways they could help their wedding couples create their own truly personalized moments.

Once such example revolved around a bride named Jenni, from June of 2006, who wanted to find a fun way to spotlight her sister and maid of honor, Heather. As we discussed the details of her relationship with her sister, Jenni told me that Heather had quite the reputation in their family for being a prankster. Her dilemma was in trying to find an unusual way to let her sister “steal the spotlight” in a manner that would fit her well-known penchant for pulling practical jokes. As we discussed several options, I finally suggested a solution that made Jenni’s eyes light up.

At the reception, when Jenni was just about to toss her bouquet over her head, at the last moment, she turned on her heel and did a shovel pass with the bouquet directly to her sister, Heather, who then took off running out of the tent while I played the theme music from *The Benny Hill Show*. Heather could be heard shouting “Woo Hoo!” as she left the tent waving the bouquet over her head while her entire family began cracking up with laughter.

I showed a brief video clip of this uniquely

creative moment during my seminar and then, within weeks, I began to realize that maybe doing so might have been a mistake. I began receiving e-mails from DJs thanking me for my seminar and sharing how they had used the runaway bridesmaid with the bouquet idea at their next few weddings and how it had been a big hit. And that’s when it hit me: these DJs had not really been paying attention to my seminar at all. They were merely looking for the next Cha Cha Slide or dollar pass game to plug into their events. They completely missed the point I was trying to make.



Let’s Get Personal

This creative moment had been created just for that bride and her sister. I had never done that for a bride before—and I haven’t done it for any other brides since. I was striving to create something uniquely personal for their event...but the DJs I was getting feedback from were only looking for a new prank to pull off at their weddings...one that they could use at every wedding...regardless of whether it really fit that bride and her bridesmaid personally.

I found myself beginning to question what I should share and how much I should share in such situations in the future. I found myself wondering why so many of our fellow “professionals” seem unable to think creatively for themselves and focus on developing something unique for their clients, rather than giving them cookie-cutter routines. I found myself re-examining some of my current performance ideas to see if any of them were becoming standardized routines instead of uniquely personalized moments.

This self-examination was uncomfortable, to say the least. But if we are to ever graduate into a recognized industry of “professionals,” then we all need to apply these questions to ourselves. If we do, our clients will begin to see more value in our services and experience reception celebrations that are much more creatively personalized and memorable. Only then will we be able to say that we provide truly creative entertainment—instead of just continuing to remain creatively challenged. ●

iPhone Ethics

By Dr. Bruce Weinstein

Ten years ago, Apple Inc. began using the phrase “Think different” in its advertising campaigns, and the phrase quickly became as iconic as “Where’s the beef?” “Got milk?” and other catchy slogans.

On June 29, 2007, the company released its newest invention, the iPhone, and Wall Street analysts predicted that Apple would sell three million units in the first weeks of the phone’s release, according to The New York Times. This combination cell phone-iPod-camera-Web browser is the sleekest, hippest consumer electronic device in years, and the phone has gotten nearly as much press as the Iraq war, *Spider-Man 3*, or Paris Hilton. Surely everyone who hopes to be cool will want an iPhone, and what could be wrong with owning what is already the most talked-about accessory since, well, the iPod? A lot, as it turns out.



What Does the “I” Really Stand For?

Our society has devolved into a mass of turned-on, tuned-out, and plugged-in technophiles. Whatever distinction used to exist between public and private life is all but gone, as one can witness on any city street, bus, plane, or shopping mall. Waiting in line at the grocery store or post office used to mean striking up a conversation with the person in front of you. It now involves blurting the intimate details of one’s love life into a cell phone for all to hear, or scrolling through a playlist for just the right song, or surfing the Web for something we want but don’t really need.

I will call this new form of behavior “iSolation,” and there are three major costs associated with it.

The first is an opportunity cost. Our social fabric is in danger of being ripped to shreds as we swap electronic connection for personal relationships. The very nature of community depends upon us being connected to one another. Being civil means, or at least used to mean, valuing our relationships beyond our immediate circle of family and friends. If upon leaving home we immerse ourselves in idle chatter on the phone, listen to music nonstop at volume

levels that preclude hearing the world around us, read every piece of email sent since the last time we checked, or hunt for bargains on the Internet, we miss the chance on the way to work to make new friendships, renew old ones, or simply say hello to a stranger. A community is not merely a collection of individuals. It is a web—the kind with a small “w”—of interconnectedness, and this web cannot exist for long if each of its constituents is

concerned primarily or exclusively with itself.

The second cost of iSolation is to our psychological health. I don’t know about you, but my best ideas come when I’m either doing something mundane like brushing my teeth, or simply daydreaming. That’s right, daydreaming. A waste of time, you say? Not at all. To be creative is to have the freedom to dream, to let thoughts appear and evaporate, and to—dare I use such a word in a business column—play. “But I’m too busy to play,” you reply. Nonsense. Some of the time spent fidgeting with a cell phone or MP3 player is time we could put to better use, such as doing nothing at all. When our brains are constantly stimulated by electronic data, they are, of necessity, precluded from taking anything else in, such as the random thoughts that can be the genesis of great ideas. The nonstop avalanche of images and sounds from electronic media (among other distractions) is a barrier, not a portal, to creativity.

The third cost of our absorption in technology may be the most serious of all: an increased risk of morbidity and mortality. A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* concluded that drivers who use a cell phone are four times more likely to be involved in an accident than are drivers who do not. The American Automobile Association has challenged that study, but it doesn’t really matter who is right. Imagine that your son or daughter has just gotten a driver’s license and is taking your car out for a spin. Would it matter to you if other drivers are yakking away on a cell phone while cruising next to, or heading toward, your child? Of course it would—and it should. Driving is challenging enough without having to worry about people around you

being literally driven to distraction. We are, to borrow a phrase from the late author Neil Postman, amusing ourselves to death. In response to two MP3-player-related pedestrian deaths in his district earlier this

The nonstop avalanche of images and sounds from electronic media (among other distractions) is a barrier, not a portal, to creativity.

year, New York State Senator Carl Kruger proposed a bill that would ban people from using cell phones, “personal data assistants,” and other electronic devices while crossing the street in New York City. Many were outraged by the proposal, but it makes a lot of sense. When you’re arguing with your colleague or spouse on the phone, or reading the latest memo from the boss, you simply cannot be on guard against traffic. There is a limit to how much even the most skilled multitasker can accomplish.

None of what I am saying is a call to return to the days when people got their entertainment by huddling together in front of a radio (though that sounds pretty good, if you ask me). Nor is it an indictment of capitalism and the push to sell bigger, better, newer, and faster gizmos. There’s nothing wrong with that, as far as it goes. After all, technology is morally neutral. It can be put to useful or harmful purposes.

So if the introduction into our culture of several million iPhones results in more self-absorption, less time to daydream, and more pedestrian and driver accidents, it won’t be the fault of Apple, or the IT industry as a whole, or Madison Avenue, or the news media, or the automobile industry, or anyone else we care to blame. It will be our own fault.

But it’s not too late to truly think different. ●

*Dr. Bruce Weinstein is a public speaker and corporate consultant known as The Ethics Guy. His latest book is, *Life Principles: Feeling Good by Doing Good* (Emmis Books). In 2008, Roaring Brook Press will publish his next book, which will focus on ethical issues for teens. To contact Dr. Weinstein, visit TheEthicsGuy.com or call 800 285 6988.*

Training Is Failing Better

By Mike Walter

Samuel Beckett, the great Irish novelist and playwright, in one of his last published works, *Worstward Ho*, wrote a line that has been repeated often: “Fail better.”

Actually the entire line is: “Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.” While I am tempted to apply that line to the businessmen and owners amongst us who surely practice a similar philosophy daily, I will instead focus on my own de facto area of expertise: training. Specifically, performance training.

The First Time: NOT a Charm

When I first stick a script and a microphone into a new trainee’s hands, I expect failure. I actually root for failure. I mean, if this neophyte ever nailed bridal party introductions or an Electric Slide setup on the first shot, I would be forced to reconsider just how tough our jobs really are.

But they don’t. They never do and they never will. They fail the first time and the second time and the third time. And in their failures is where I get the opportunity to teach. Let me repeat that because I think it is so very important:

It is in their failures that you get the opportunity to teach.

When they gesture with little alligator arms you get to show them how important it is to be big and animated. When they stand in one spot while they speak you get to instruct them on how you hold an audience’s attention by moving around. When their voice trails off timidly at the end of a statement, you get to demonstrate the importance of confidence and assertiveness. And when they speak with an expressionless face, you get to illustrate how infectious a smile and eye contact can be.

So in essence, I am teaching my trainees, in Samuel Beckett’s words, to “fail better.”

Falling Up

One of the reasons I bring this up is that, as a trainer, it’s important to keep your students’ failures in mind. If patience is one of the traits you lack (and almost every DJ I have ever met certainly does) you may find yourself wishing your trainees would progress faster. You show them something

once and they don’t get it, so you start getting frustrated, or worse, thinking you’ve got the wrong people in training and they’ll NEVER get it!

Take a deep breath and understand that every step forward, every “better failure,” is a step closer to...their debut.

I was tempted to write “completion” just then, but I remembered that training is never complete. Even after I sign off on a guy and we start booking him, he will continue to fail and I will continue to teach. Of course we



expect the failures to be “much better” by this point, but they will continue. Heck we all still continue to fail, don’t we? I mean, I’ve been DJing now coming up on twenty years and I still fail. Not quite like I did as a newbie back in the day, but when I

ask myself Randy Bartlett’s great “1% Solution” question, “What could I have done to make this event better than it was?” I still see my own shortcomings and failures—and I strive to improve.

I had an odd request this past weekend at a wedding I was DJing. One of those songs you get asked for and think, really? That used to work but will it now? The request came from the brother of the bride so I figured I’d honor it and see how it worked out. I played it and they danced and sang to it and since I already had the idea for this article fermenting in my head I had to laugh a bit at the parallels between Samuel Beckett’s “fail better” and Chumbawamba’s “I get knocked down, but I get up again...”

They both say the same thing. Your goal is to help your trainees do both. Fall down. And get up again. Fail better. ●

It is in their failures that you get the opportunity to teach.





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Benefits Update

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 44

frequently, as needed. Also tux pants can now be easily and affordably replaced should you snag them or tear them by accident. Now you can provide all of your staff members with excellent, matching formalwear!

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Hey DJ! Welcome to back to the Master's Series: The Game Master's take on games, performance, marketing, and DJ business concepts, designed to take your business to the next level, and beyond. Each article will tap your potential, stretch your limits, and inspire you to—to give your clients what they want, make them raving fans, have them refer you to all their friends, and keep coming back for more! Just what we all want.

By Scott Faver, The Game Master

Let's chat for a moment about table names. Offer your bride the option to personalize their wedding day and make your guests feel special by offering them more than just an insignificant table number. The following alternatives to those boring numbers...or, better yet, come up with some of your own!

- Places you have visited while dating
- Places you will visit during your honeymoon
- Popular honeymoon destinations - Poconos, Paris, Hawaii...
- Names of famous married couples
- Names of your favorite sporting teams
- Names of your favorite songs, albums, artists
- Names of your favorite movies, actors, stars
- City \ State \ Country names where guests have traveled from
- Romantic words - Love, Joy, Cherish, Serenity...

THE MASTER'S SERIES

Turning the Tables

Whether your bride assigns seats, reserves tables, or not, she can still name her tables. Guests will have a sense of belonging, team spirit, and connection with everyone at their table. Group dynamics are improved, and her wedding will be that much more fun.

Photoshop tip: If you or your bride is familiar with Adobe Photoshop® or other photo editing software, either of you can place your pictures/faces into pictures of famous places she would like to visit, as if she had already been there: Hawaii, Paris, the "Hollywood" sign, London, Statue of Liberty, etc.

If you must do numbers, use numbers with significance, and make a game of it:

- 452 = Number days the couple dated before the proposal
- 2 = Number of dates before the bride and groom's first kiss
- 6 = Number of pets
- 2381 = Bride's birth date

Game idea: Using just the table numbers (like the ones above) only, ask the guests to guess what their table number represents!

For more a free list of famous married couples, romantic table names or significant number suggestions visit: <http://thepartyfavers.com/maillistform.html> ●

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Wednesday - Oct. 31 - Exhibits and Social - Ft. Lauderdale
Thursday - Nov. 1st - Leave Ft. Lauderdale on the DJ Cruise
Friday - Nov. 2nd - Key West then seminars, networking and more
Saturday - Nov. 3rd - Cozumel, Mexico
Sunday - Nov. 4th - Fun Day at Sea - seminars, networking and more
Monday - Nov. 5th - Back to Ft. Lauderdale

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LED Technology Clearly in VUE

By Jake Feldman

Chauvet has made the wonders of LED accessible to DJs—and exciting too

Since its inception in the mobile DJ market, LED lighting has been basically confined to the “wash” spectrum of applications. Sure, there are LED “yoke heads” and LED tubes, but there has never been a line of LED effects lighting that were both visually stunning and readily available—until now.

New Family Portrait

Chauvet’s new VUE series utilizes their increasingly popular LED technology that encompasses lightweight construction, bright light, and unparalleled longevity, not to mention very low heat emission. Plus, the VUE fixtures expand LED unquestionably into the effect category.

The series starts with three remarkable fixtures, the VUE I, VUE II, and VUE III. Debuting at NAMM in January, the series garnered buzz both on that convention floor and all across the country on the company’s recent (and very successful) national promotional tour. One thing is for certain, whether it be at NAMM or MBLV07, DJs all across the country are getting a new “VUE” on LED lighting, and they like what they see.

VUE I is a small but ferocious (and welcome) alternative to tired “mushroom” effects. Its small size and light weight make it easily mountable

on any truss or tripod, and better yet, the unit is fully data-linkable for multiple unit cohesion. For effects, the unit produces beams of red, green, and blue that, in fog, are similar to, but not quite as powerful as what you’d see coming from an actual laser beam effect.

VUE II is a steady and stouter older sibling, complete with more patterns and a chase function, and a larger “throw” area. The II is also a bit brighter and, along with the I and III, is both DMX capable and “sound reactive.” In stand-alone mode. Comparatively, the VUE II is a “different” octagonal shape which makes it easily installable in applications that require weird angles to achieve optimal lighting effect.

VUE III is, for me, where the fun really starts to take off. This is the “momma bear” light of the series and the reason why the series is poised for greatness. The large throw area of the III, complimenting the numerous patterns and chases this fixture performs, really make it a one-of-a-kind unit.

A drawback that I found on the VUE II in particular, was in the lens portion of the box. With a little force, the “flexi-glass” that spreads patterns can come into the light about a half an inch, but not more. This, to most people, is not a big deal and it can easily be pulled out again. Hopefully, on future versions, Chauvet will rectify this minor detail.

A VUE of the Road

With LED lighting, DJs know that they are buying a product that will last longer than conventional fixtures. The VUE series from Chauvet, along with being handsome, is also sturdy. As part of my “testing” process, i.e. part of my clumsiness, the II happened to fall out of my van as I was preparing to load into a facility. After a bounce on the pavement, I quickly checked to see what damage had occurred from my unfortunate mishap. Much to my surprise, even after a fall of four feet, the light not only worked upon first inspection, but continued to perform flawlessly over the next few weeks of gigging.

During their time on the road with me, the VUE series fixtures performed in outstanding fashion, from middle schools to high schools to wedding receptions and everything in between. Guests, planners, and students alike were impressed. These VUE lights provide a top dollar effect for a reasonable price; this series may well be the best thing to hit the “basic effect” category since the mushroom, oh so many years ago. ■

MSRPs: VUE I: \$189.99; VUE II: \$377.99, VUE III: \$419.99 - www.chauvet.com





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**Industry's first*

The Show Is Under Control

By Carl E. Ondraka

The Numark DMC2 Controller helps you bring out the best in your DJ software

It's been over five years since Numark released the DMC1. Designed for disc jockeys, it started the MP3 software controller revolution. Since then, there have been other controllers, but nothing compared to the Numark DMC2, released this year at Winter NAMM. The DMC2 professional software controller is HOT.... and looks to give a DJ, KJ or VJ a powerful new device to control software-based digital playback systems. Simple to install and use, the DMC2 does not require any software parameters to be configured and only needs to be enabled in a program's configuration settings to activate it. To control the included CUE LE software, the DMC2's high-speed USB 2.0 interface is optimized to allow jocks to mix, loop, and scratch digital audio and video files, including MP3+G karaoke files. With a dual set of well laid out controls and two large backlit LCD screens, the DMC2 provides a quicker, more accurate and intuitive interface compared to using keyboards, mice or other input devices. So let's take a closer look.

Unboxing the Control Box

As received, the DMC2 is double boxed to protect it from shipping damage. Surrounding the unit, inside the colorful display box, is a padded sleeve with large foam end blocks to secure it in the box. In the bottom of the box are these included items: USB A/B Cable (to connect the DMC2 to a PC/Mac), DC power supply wall wart, and a copy of CUE LE (Lite version of Numark's CUE mixing software). Installation of the CUE program is quick and easy and was used to test the capabilities of the DMC2 for this review.

Removing the DMC2 from the packaging and picking it up is the first indication of just how well the unit is constructed. The outer case is manufactured out of only four parts, which is very sturdy for rack mounting or table top use. This is a plus for mobile jocks who need gear to withstand the rigors of daily transportation and

abuse. The face plate is a single piece of stamped out aluminum folded over at the top and bottom to connect it to the back. The back of the case is a single piece of folded sheet steel. The only other parts are the rack ears that are made out of extruded aluminum. All four pieces screw together to form the strong case. On the back are rubber feet to isolate the unit from vibrations and to keep the unit stable when using it on a table top. Underneath the top edge are the only two external connections, the power input connector and the USB2.0 port.

Moving to the control surface the next feature we look at is the large backlit blue LCD displays for each deck. Packed with detailed information, it has the ability to display artist and track information along with other text items like selectable functions and the folder structure where your tracks are stored. Also in the display are the BPM, pitch lock icon, key lock icon, +/- percentage of pitch/key change, and the standard Cue/Play/Pause indicators. As we move across the decks controls we see the two large and smooth acting jog wheels. Made of cast material they spin freely for a long time and are very responsive. The next items are all the buttons. Other than the smart loop, 7 loop buttons, wheel mode, and pitch slider, all the

other buttons on the controller have a rubber textured surface giving them a smooth, soft feel when pressed. Some of the buttons have a dim glow backlight behind them to find them easily in the dark. Most of the buttons, when pressed, light up brightly to indicate activation. Some of the buttons on the left deck control are blue backlit, while the buttons on the right are red backlit. This allows a quick look at the control surface, in the dark, to determine which functions for each deck are active. The last and exciting control is the Push Select button/knob. It's used as a knob to scroll thru different functions, folders, and tracks, and used as a button to select actions. There are many other buttons that will be detailed later in the review. So let's hook it up.

Getting Connected

Installation and connection of the DMC2 to a PC or Mac is very easy. Compatible with USB 2.0, the DMC2 is a plug-and-play HID (Human Interface Device) and requires no drivers to be manually installed. To use the DMC2, first connect the power supply, wait for the self-test to complete (on the front of the Display the words "CONNECTING" will flash on the screen), and then connect the USB cable to your desktop or laptop. The computer will recognize the DMC2





as a USB HID and install the necessary drivers to communicate with it. After driver configuration the display will flash "PC NO LINK" indicating that there is no software running in the computer trying to link to the DMC2. The control software can now be started (Numark's CUE software for this review). Before the controller can be used it has to be enabled in the control software. In the CUE program opening the configuration dialog window and the Remote Control tab all that is necessary to enable the DMC2 is to click the check box and click "OK" to start using it. If all the steps are done correctly the display will clear and the DMC2 displays "Welcome to CUE" and is ready to use. When done using the DMC2, exiting the control software will clear the displays and a "GOODBYE" message is shown indicating the unit can be powered down.

So What About All Those Buttons?

(Note: This review discusses the buttons as they apply to Numark's CUE Software and will function differently based on which software package you are using. Review the software manufacturer's manual for more details on how the buttons react to the particular software package you are using.)

Buttons, wheels, sliders, knobs, and visual indicators...the DMC2 has more control options than competitive controllers. Each virtual deck

features a duplicate set of controls. Let's look at the left side of the controller. In the upper left, next to the large display, is the first set of controls we'll review. The TIME DISPLAY button toggles the display between Elapsed/Total/Remain. The total time display allows a quick view of the original track length (sum of the elapsed and remain values). Also to the left of the display is the PUSH/SELECT button and when combined with the FLDR (Folder) and FILE buttons (under the TIME DISPLAY button), it makes scrolling thru the music folders on the display or computer screen quick and simple. This removes the need to use a keyboard except for the search function to find music. By pressing the FLDR button the DMC2 display shows the file folder name you are currently searching and in the upper right of the display a small icon illuminates to indicate FLDR mode. Also in the upper right are icons for FILE/FX/SMPL which will be discussed later. Twisting the PUSH/SELECT knob allows the user to scroll up/down the folder list. Pressing the knob selects the highlighted/displayed folder. Next to the FLDR button is the FILE button and functions similarly to the FLDR button. Pressing FILE allows scrolling thru the file list. Each click changes the track/artist name in the DMC2 display and also on the PC/Mac screen, so looking at the screen is not necessary.

Below the FLDR/FILE button is the FX/SAMPLER button, pressing it toggles between the two modes and also toggles on/off the FX/SMPL icons on the right of the display. FX mode allows different effects to be selected using the PUSH/SELECT button. Scrolling thru the different effects, they are shown on the display, and can be turned on/off using the PUSH/SELECT button. The SAMPLER mode allows recorded samples to be played at the same time the current deck is playing a track. Just press the SAMPLER button, twist the PUSH/SELECT knob thru the samples (ex: AirRaid), and press the SELECT button to hear the sample played with the current track.

To the right of the display is the PITCH ADJUST +/-/KEYLOCK buttons. These function similarly for most software packages. To the far left is the JOG WHEEL and WHEEL MODE button. The WHEEL MODE button changes the functionality of the JOG WHEEL. Pressing it toggles the display and function between Scratch/Move-Loop/Shrink-Loop/Search/Nudge modes. The WHEEL MODE button also illuminates as well as a small icon above the jog wheel to indicate which mode is selected. The functions in Cue are:

Nudge: allows temporary adjustment of pitch; Scratch: acts just like the conventional record scratch sound; Move-Loop: changes the



start point of a loop that has already been set and engaged; Shrink-Loop: adjusts the length of a loop that is set and engaged; Search: allows the jog wheel to quickly scan forward/back in the track loaded into the deck.

To the right of the jog wheel are the loop buttons and smart lock loop button. The LOOP (1/8-8 values) buttons when pressed will instantly create loops of the corresponding size (fractions of 1 bar) starting at the moment the button is pressed. The loops can be in the middle of a beat or right on the beat depending on when the loop button is pressed. The SMART LOOP LOCK button, when engaged, will align all LOOP buttons perfectly with the beat of the music playing. This takes some of the difficulty out of trying to press the LOOP buttons at the exact time to start the loop. Below the loop buttons are the playback buttons. The LOOP IN/LOOP OUT buttons allow custom loops to be created when not using the fixed length LOOP buttons. The BACK BEAT button when pressed will jump back one beat instantly to create a double beat. Below the Loop buttons are the HOT START and SYNC buttons. There are two hot start buttons, when pressed will instantly start playback from stored cue points, if previously set. If no cue points are set, the first press will set the cue point, and the second press will start playback from that point whenever the HOT button is pressed. The bottom row of the playback section is the CUE/PAUSE/PLAY-STUTTER buttons. The PLAY/STUTTER button starts playback and if pressed again it will restart the music from the last position you pressed play from, creating a "stutter" effect. PAUSE when pressed will stop playback of the music at the current location, press PLAY to resume playback. If the PAUSE button is pressed a second time, it will return to the last set cue point (if one has been set) or it will return to the start of the track. Pressing PAUSE a third time

will return to the beginning of the track if a cue point had been previously set. The CUE button, when pressed, pauses and returns the music to the set cue point. This leaves us with the PITCH SLIDER. Which is used to adjust pitch or tempo depending on with mode is selected. This covers the deck functions but there are a few other buttons/indicators.

In the center of the controller is a VU meter to display the beat or level of the tracks being played. Below the meter are the VIDEO/AUDIO/AUTOMIX buttons. The VIDEO buttons control CUE's internal video mixer when mixing with video content. Press the left/right VIDEO buttons will mix back and forth between decks. The AUDIO buttons activate the internal software faders to create transitions without an audio mixer. AUTOMIX turns on/off the automatic mixing function of CUE.

How Does It Rate?

Construction (4.0): Very solid construction and durable controls/buttons. The tactile feel of the buttons is a plus compared to the hard buttons on many other controllers. The only reasons for not achieving a score of 5.0 are the lack of an ON/OFF switch or button and the brushed aluminum face plate surface. The brushed aluminum face plate gets dirty easily with dust/dirt and no power switch/button requires an external method to be installed (not a huge problem).

Ease of Install (5.0): No problems with software or hardware install. Directions are concise and accurate.

Layout/Controls (4.0): The layout of the controls is simple to learn and use. An additional mode in the CUE software to disable the jog wheel would be nice for when it's not being used. Many of the

controls are close to the jog wheel and accidentally brushing into the jog wheel is possible keeping this score from being a 5.0.

Accuracy/Timing (5.0): Using high speed USB 2.0 connection, there were no delays between using the controls and the reaction of the CUE software.

Display (5.0): The large bright display is chock full of information (including: track/artist, folder/track, time, BPM and more). This and the backlit buttons are the best features of this controller.

In summary, this is one of the best controllers I have reviewed and having only played with the controller and included CUE software for two weeks it's was one of the easiest to learn and use. The display and its ability to show text for many of the functions is the greatest asset of this controller. It will be exciting to see how other software manufacturers integrate the DMC2 into their programs, giving MP3/video jocks the ultimate in control for their performances. ■

CONSTRUCTION	4.0
EASE OF INSTALL	5.0
LAYOUT/CONTROLS	4.0
ACCURACY/TIMING	5.0
DISPLAY	5.0
TOTAL	4.6

1-Poor 5-Excellent

MSRP: \$699.95
Street Price: under \$400
www.numark.com



Staying on Top

By Bret Agard

The new Topper from DJ Skirts can help elevate your look



For several years, DJ Skirts has offered a number of high-quality products designed to help DJs project a clean, professional look. Besides a basic, classy black table skirt, these include skirts for speaker and lighting stands, pole sleeves, backdrops and façades.

DJ Skirts has now released their newest DJ tabletop façade, the Topper. In contrast to the heavier, carpeted façades that have been on the market for some time, their new design is a lightweight, plastic material that can extend from four to eight feet wide. Now, if you're wondering about the appearance of a large piece of plastic and feeling a little doubtful, I can tell you that during the six events I have done since getting it, I have had other vendors comment on how nice, clean and professional my setup looks with the topper. I even had a sound tech from a local AV company ask me where I got it, as he wants to get some for his company to use.

Outta Sight on Site

As you can see in the accompanying photo, I have less than three inches of cord showing out of the side of my table. If you are using the DJ Skirts table skirt or a skirting from a hotel, you have very limited cord showing. I no longer have to worry about my cords being a mess in the back of my system, or cords hanging down the side of my rack. Instead, there are simply two small openings on each side to run cords through.

The Topper's three pieces slide together quickly and easily. The large piece comes with an expandable section that you can just pull out to extend the topper from four feet out to eight feet, to cover the length of a standard folding table. Set-up for the façade has been taking me less than two minutes. We have had four DJs from our company take the unit out, and all of them have come back to me and have asked me to get them their own. The Topper is available in all black, or black on one side, and white on the other. This makes it reversible, based upon your set-up. One thing I liked about having the white on the inside is that it brightened up my work area on the table top behind the façade.

The façade comes with a large storage bag for the topper, with two small sleeves for the sides. All of these zip up into a convenient zipper bag with an over-the-shoulder carry bag. This protects the whole unit from scratches and chipping. Being plastic, the façade has some flexibility that helps it resist damage, as well.

For a fresh, clean look, the Topper is an excellent option to help "class up" the appearance of your DJ rig. Check it out at www.djskirts.com. ■

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Cee-Lite Up Your World!

By Stu Chisholm

**You just learned “LED”—
now add “LEC” to your
lighting lexicon**

When it comes to lighting, the DJ world is abuzz with new and exciting lighting effects using LEDs, those light emitting diodes that have finally come into their own. When I saw the first LED back in the 70s, it was in my old Pulsar digital wristwatch. Soon, the red LEDs were turning up in electronics everywhere, replacing old, incandescent indicator lights and, of course, digital displays. But LEDs were a bit like the first Ford cars: you could have any color you wanted—as long as you wanted red.

Knowing how technology works, I once predicted that these humble LED lights would eventually replace things like traffic signal lights, brake lights on cars and so on. Others argued with me: “They’re not bright enough! They can’t make any color but red!” and on and on. But progress, well, progresses. In the time since my first glimpse of the lowly red LED, they’ve gotten much brighter, have the ability to project laser light, have become available in a rainbow of colors, and now they can even change colors! Indeed, they are now in those traffic signal lights as well as the brake lights in newer cars. And at long last, they’re setting the DJ lighting world on fire. Yet now, some 34 years later, I have seen the “next big thing” that might have an even greater impact on our world.

Let’s Get Flexible

I discovered it when my wife brought home an issue of Time magazine because she knew that I’d be interested in the topic on the cover: “God vs. Science.” She was right, but what caught my attention even more when thumbing through its pages was their round-up of “The Best Inventions of 2006.” One of them in particular caught my eye: a company and product called CeeLite®. They have pioneered LEC (Light Emitting Capacitor) technology that can turn any surface into a



Just about any object can become a light source.

light source. The company’s flat light panel, “the flat, flexible light bulb” as they call it, provides flawless, even surface illumination and is highly durable. Because of my background in sound and lighting, I wondered why I hadn’t heard of this yet. My imagination was running wild with the possibilities for both club and mobile DJs!

I made a virtual beeline to their website, www.ceelite.com, whose home page shows a picture of the Time cover I’d just read. There, they explain the technology and show some photos of various applications that CeeLite has been used for. Not only are the panels thin and flexible, but can also follow curves and applied to just about any surface. Further, it is both dimmable and DMX-controllable. Yet surprisingly, very few of the applications shown on their site involve entertainers! Two notable exceptions are the Red Hot Chili Peppers and The Roots, who applied CeeLite to their drum kits, which now pulsate in time with their music. Many interior designers have taken advantage of CeeLite for illuminating everything from stairs to countertops. My mind racing with ideas, I couldn’t understand why more entertainers weren’t using CeeLite everywhere. Maybe they just don’t know about it! So I decided to fix that oversight.

After a few emails to the company, a review sample arrived. It contained a letter-sized 8.5” X 11” CeeLite panel which is silver on one side and pink on the other, a power inverter that controls the panel and a wall wart power supply. I was struck by how flat the panel is, much like a laminated piece of paper. Snapping together the automotive style connectors, I was ready to power it up.

The Light Fantastic

Flipping the switch on the inverter made the formerly pink surface of the panel glow a surprisingly bright white. It then began to pulse, dimming to a low glow and then brightening again, a bit like a UFO in the movies. A closer inspection of the inverter revealed a three-position switch and dimmer control. Flipping the switch to the center position makes the panel remain full on, and the third position makes it flash on and off. (The dimmer becomes a duration control in the other positions.)

We hear the word “revolutionary” in advertising all the time, yet it’s usually more hype than reality. CeeLite is a rare exception. According to the company’s literature, LEC technology is

comprised of three critical components: higher quality light emitting phosphors for brightness, by OSRAM SYLVANIA (well known by DJs for their other lamps), combined with CeeLite’s proprietary blending processes for the whitest color, advanced, proprietary, programmable Flatline Inverters to control levels of brightness and ambience, and lastly, advanced “packaging materials” for lower heat generation and phosphor protection. They are also screen printable, and available in a more rigid format. What all of this means is that just about any object can become a light source! Illuminated signs and advertising can be installed in places that would be impossible with conventional methods. They can also be installed on vehicles.

Panels are available in many standard sizes; from tiny cell phone display-style pieces to large 3’ x 6’ panels the size of drywall. Custom sizes and shapes can also be created.

Since it arrived, my sample panel has been running for about two hours. While there is a subtle warmth to it, I wouldn’t really describe it as “heat.” In fact, it’s cooler to the touch than skin temperature.

Limited Only by Your Imagination

The first idea that popped into my head when reading about CeeLite was an illuminated dance floor. There are already lighted dance floors on the market, but the panels are very thick, need to be assembled block-style and take up a lot of space in a van or trailer. Liability is a concern too, as someone could fall off of an edge. An equivalently sized floor made from CeeLite panels could be stacked in a single case, would be thinner than a standard wood floor and, again, could be DMX controlled. Testing the dance floor idea, I placed my review panel on my kitchen floor and stood on it. Then stomped on it! There wasn’t even a flicker, and suffice it to say that I’m no lightweight.

Other uses that immediately spring to mind include lighted backdrops, illuminated tabletops, accent lighting for consoles and truss systems, lit runways for fashion shows and pageants, and even lighted place settings and centerpiece bases. (Imagine the rental possibilities!) So, what might YOU do with a little CeeLite in your life?

As always, if you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please feel free to e-mail me at DJ@DJStu.com. Until next time, safe spinnin’!



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Broadening the Spectrum

By DJ Dr. Drax

Spectrum brings crisp color options to American DJ's expanding LED line

It has been very interesting to see the emergence of LED technology into the midline-priced moonflower effects. American DJ's new Spectrum is a good example of this trend. I still remember my first Verti-Pro. Back in the day, this was the shizzle. Unlike other DJs that were directing them down on the dance floor, I was pointing them skyward from the trussing, or positioning them on a T-stand in the corner of the room. This produced a wonderful room-warming effect, lighting the corner and ceiling wonderfully.

Functional Spectrum

I found the same to be useful with the Spectrum, only it was on steroids. I was able to control the pattern and speed of presentation on the effect through the use of DMX.

Right from the start I was thinking of cool uses for this unit. One of the really interesting things is the potential for digital messaging. When you power up the Spectrum, "American DJ" is presented in a scrolling fashion. I see a real future for this fixture, with a subtle software upgrade to allow the spelling to be DMX controllable. Imagine being able to present messages and other information simply with a light fixture, where we now require custom gobos or video systems to present. Here's hoping.

The Spectrum has a number of useful built-in program modes, which made for a good presentation, even without DMX. Most were very nice when presented in a master/slave arrangement running in auto or sound active mode. I enjoyed the ability to link and sync them, controlling the mood easily. One eye-catching setting is "line mode" which features the presentation of a directed, almost laser-like beam effect, that then has colors change down the line.

Stellar Performance

I found that the beams were very bright, sharp and crisp, unlike moonflower effects of the past. Given just a toot of haze from my hazer, the colors really became vibrantly alive. One test I always do is to see how well the effect holds up with no particulate, since many event locations are prohibiting fog or haze. This one held its own with the bright colors and plentiful

sections of built-in programs. As with all mid-tier moonflower effects, this one has a built in mic to make the unit sound-activated. Selecting the sound programs is done from a digital display button keypad on the rear of the unit.

I liked that it had a safety eye built in for suspension of the light over the crowd. The unit is very tough. I actually ended up giving it a couple of solid drops from the bench to a concrete floor. Now, I would not suggest that you do that with your unit, but this one held up very well. With a lifetime of 50K hours, most of us will have long

since retired before this fixture needs a new set of LEDs.

This fixture represents a solid performer for anyone wishing a bright, interesting moonflower effect light. Two of these, two scanners and four LED pars, and you would have a wonderful, solid, basic light show. In fact, for the very budget-minded, two Spectrums could light a typical reception dance floor quite nicely and provide a great foundation for later lighting enhancements. The Spectrum is a solid fixture at a good price. I now have two and will be getting two more.. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

- LED Moonflower with 64 sharp Red, Green & Blue high output colored beams
- Output similar to a 150W Halogen lamp
- Produces LED patterns that can be projected on a dance floor or wall
- Easy-to-use - Operational by its own built-in light show (Sound active) or DMX-512 (USITT)
- High output with new lens technology
- Very low power consumption
- Extreme long lifetime of the LEDs (100,000 hr. rating)
- Linkable via 3-pin XLR DMX In/Output
- 4 DMX Channels
- LED DMX display with 3-button menu
- Dimensions (LxWxH): 7"x9"x5" / 178x229x127mm
- Weight: 7 lbs. / 3.2 kgs.

MSRP: \$199.99
American DJ
www.americandj.com



Appropriate Use of Power

By Jake Feldman

This combo from E-V helps you provide potent but tailored sound

For many shows, disc jockeys have to decide what "over kill" and "under kill" are.

At a 250-person wedding, a line array is definitely overkill. For the 2,500-person prom, a pair of self-powered 450-watt speakers is unquestionably underkill. For most jocks, it is not that they want to commit such an obvious audio atrocity, it is that they are limited by their wallet and schedule as to what they may purchase and use for their event.

Solid Stack of Sound

Electro-Voice speakers are known for their smooth sound, sleek looks, and marketplace sensibility. Two of their products, the ZX1 High Performance Compact Loudspeaker and the SB122 Sx/Sb Series Speaker System fit together seamlessly to offer you the ability to pull off those "small" shows without blasting Grandma out of the room, or leaving your guests wondering why the DJ showed up with what sounded like a home stereo unit.

On the audio low end, the SB122 packs just the right "tight" punch you have been looking for, without the back strain. At a shockingly light 33 lbs, this little workhorse puts out 400 watts continuous, with a program handling output of 800W and a peak of 1600W. While rubber footings provide piece of mind in a sturdy base, the SB122 may also be flown if desired, with optional hardware available from EV.

Also flyable and easy to transport, the ZX1 brings out the highs and mids with a nice, crisp

200 watts (continuous). With a 90° by 50° coverage pattern, you rest assured that your outer guests will hear the ever important announcements emitting from within. The ZX1 also acts as a great floor monitor for small bands, speaking engagements, and churches.

Getting Amped Up

When used together with EV's CP2200 Compact Precision Series Class H Power Amplifier, these speakers offer great support for your small events. At a low volume, the system presents a great clarity and attention to the music. After dinner, however, these speakers provide a warm, rich, yet crisp sound that leaves one wondering how a system so compact and light can possess such a bite.

As a unit, these speakers fit into the right "niche" for small events. As I tested them, I became aware of a slight problem not with the speakers, but with the Asp Ev-1 poles that come with this system. As is common in similar setups, the poles had pin clips that I was not using correctly, because of the presence of tightening knobs. I quickly learned that such a mistake

would create a vibration of the pin, which can be annoying. After the misuse was corrected and the pin was placed correctly, the problem was solved.

I brought these speakers out to numerous events, most notably a wedding at a church gymnasium that was being used as a reception site. Usually, in a gymnasium, most of the high end is transported away from your audience and into the ceiling, creating a headache for guests and for the DJ. With this system, I was able

to convey every important word of the Couple of Honor's special day, and was complemented about how well the system worked in such an acoustical nightmare—over kill or under kill. ■

SPECS

ZX1 HIGH PERFORMANCE COMPACT LOUDSPEAKER

Frequency Response (-3dB)	60Hz-20kHz
Frequency Response (-10dB)	48Hz-20kHz
Sensitivity 1W/1m	94 dB
Max. SPL / 1m (calc); full space	123 dB
Coverage (nominal -6dB) H°	90 °
Coverage (nominal -6dB) V°	50 °
Rotatable Horn	Yes
System Power Handling (cont/prog/peak)	200/400/800W
Nominal Impedance (Passive)	8 Ohms
Input Connections	Parallel Neutrik® NL4
Weight Net	18.52 lbs
Dimensions (HxWxD)	17.76" x 11.1" x 10.35"

Sb122 SX/SB SERIES SPEAKER SYSTEM

Sensitivity 1W/1m	99 dB
Max. SPL / 1m (calc); full space	131 dB
System Power Handling (cont/prog/peak)	400/800/1600W
LF Transducer	EVS12SB
Flying	Optional
Input Connections	Parallel Neutrik® NL4
Internal Crossover	Yes
Weight Net	33.07 lbs
Dimensions (HxWxD)	23.07" x 16.89" x 12.28"

CP2200 COMPACT PRECISION SERIES CLASS H POWER AMP

Continuous rated power (1k Hz, THD 1%) 2Ω	1100 Watts
Continuous rated power (1k Hz, THD 1%) 4Ω	800 Watts
Continuous rated power (1k Hz, THD 1%) 8Ω	500 Watts
Maximum bridged output 4Ω	2200 Watts
Maximum bridged output 8Ω	1600 Watts
Total harmonic distortion	< 0.05 %
Weight Net	16 kg (35.27 lbs)
Dimensions (HxWxD)	3.47" x 19.02" x 14.52"

Electro-Voice • www.electrovoice.com





Raising the Bar: Knowledge Is

POWER

By James Humphrey

Methods for evaluating the
state of your DJ service, with
an eye toward improvement

I have DJ'd at well over 1,000 gigs, and at the end of each one I always ask the organizer if everything was OK and if they were happy with the service that I provided. At all of those functions not once have I been told anything other than positive things about my performance. Now it would be very easy to take that feedback at face value and think that I am the best DJ out there. However, that would be a very naïve assumption, as particularly in the early days there was plenty that I could have improved upon, and even now I regularly pick up ideas from books, articles and conversations with other DJs that help make what I do even better. So how do we find out about what we can do to raise the bar in terms of both our service and performance, even when all of our clients tell us that we are great?

Surveying the Situation

The most quantifiable way to measure the success of a gig is the number of referrals that are generated from it. At a large function of 100+ people there are likely to be at least two or three guests who have a celebration coming up for which they will need some kind of entertainment.

So, if each gig that you perform at generates at least another two bookings you can have a pretty good idea that you are doing a very good job and you will also soon have more people wanting to book you than you have dates available! This is a very good time to raise your prices!

But for those of us who are not in that fortunate position, what can we do to find out how to improve what we do? The easiest way to do this is simply by asking your client at the end of the night if everything was ok, but as I have already mentioned, this is not a very reliable method. At the end of an event, clients will have other things on their minds than giving an honest and well thought-out critique of your performance.

A method for eliciting feedback used by many DJs is to send a paper questionnaire to clients during the week following their event, perhaps together with a thank you letter. This allows customers to give their feedback when the event is still fresh in their minds and, because it is not given to you in person, allows them to be more honest in evaluating your performance. Written questionnaires are also a great way of obtaining recommendations that can be shown to prospective clients and used in promotional literature and websites. To encourage clients to fill in the questionnaire, it is always a good idea to include a stamped addressed envelope for returning the completed form.

I have found that the best questionnaire format starts with a list of different elements of your service with tick boxes for clients to grade each area on a scale of 1 to 5. Topics covered

could include appearance, music selection, pre-event planning, microphone use and overall guest satisfaction. I then follow this with a couple of open-ended questions such as "What could we have done to improve our service for your event?" and "What is your overall opinion of the service we provided?" The first of these is useful for finding out areas of improvement and the second is intended to provide recommendations. I have found that while most clients will fill in the first section, many either miss the second section or write something simple along the lines of "great DJ, played just the music we wanted to keep everyone dancing." While statements like this are great as recommendations, they don't help us to find out how we can improve.

Unfortunately, people usually don't like having to write out "essay-style" answers on questionnaires. I can relate to this, having been asked to fill out appraisals following training courses; I often have opinions but don't want to spend time formulating them into sentences and writing them out. Another problem with these questionnaires is that it is difficult to make them anonymous and often clients don't want to point out flaws to avoid causing offense.

DJ Calling...

A way to get around people's general unwillingness to write out essay-style answers is to call them and ask for verbal feedback. If clients have thought of something that you could have done better, they are often more likely to share it in a conversation than write it out on a questionnaire. Of course, if clients don't want to

offend you by including criticism in a written evaluation, they are even less likely to tell you in person. The solution is to employ the services of a third party, who assures the client that their comments will not be linked to their names when you are given the feedback.

This seems to me to be the ideal way of eliciting constructive criticism from customers. They are approached at a convenient time, soon after their event, by a third party, who promises anonymity and asks for verbal answers to a questionnaire. Although companies exist to provide this kind of third party survey, why not team up with a fellow DJ and carry out the questionnaires for each other? This means that the person making the call knows the business and (assuming they are any good) will be able to communicate in a friendly and professional manor.

In a Reflective Mood

Gaining feedback from clients is very important; however this is not the only way to find out how to improve your performance. While a customer will probably be able to tell the difference between a good DJ and a great one, they will struggle to identify exactly what the good DJ should do to become great. This is simply because the people who hire us are not professionals in the entertainment business.

Self-assessment is important, since often we can identify things that clients can't. This is something that we all do naturally; my first gigs were messy and would certainly not fit with the up-market hotels that I now work regularly. No one ever criticised my setup, but through a process of subconscious self-assessment, I gradually improved the collection of equipment I use. Likewise, when I first became a DJ, my performance was somewhat in the cheesy radio DJ vein. I used to talk between every record ("That was Spadau Ballet with 'Gold,' and now here's Cindy Lauper and 'Girl's Just Wanna Have Fun.'") No one told me that my performance was bad (although I'm sure that many thought it!), however as I watched what others did and figured out what works and what doesn't, I honed my performances.

Making a conscious decision to assess each performance and work out ways of improving can soon have a great impact in the quality of our performances and in turn the number of referrals we receive.

For example, a great way to improve mic technique is by recording gigs and then listening back to your links and announcements. Listen to how fast you speak, how clear your words are and if you tend to repeat certain phrases regularly. I found that before saying anything on the mic I would say "OK." This was a way of checking that the mic was working and also letting the crowd know that I was going to speak. When I started to listen back to my sets I realized that this repetition actually sounded unprofessional and I made a conscious decision to avoid starting sentences that way. While things like this may seem insignificant, correcting a number of little things can make a big difference in the overall perceived quality of your service.

An Educated Opinion

While customer feedback and self-assessment can identify many areas for improvement, sometimes there is nothing better than a critique from a professional third party. This takes some guts and an open mind, but why not ask a fellow DJ to go along to a gig with you, analyze your performance and offer suggestions for improvement? Ideally choose someone who works in a different market and is not a direct competitor; also try to find a DJ whom you respect and who is successful. Even if the person is a friend, insist on paying for their services and ask for a written appraisal—this will ensure that your critic takes the task seriously and puts effort into carefully watching what you do and making suggestions for improvement.

I hope this article has inspired you to try out some of these ideas for gaining feedback and improving both service and performance. I can imagine some readers who have been DJing for many years may be thinking that this is all well and good for the new up-and-coming jocks but not for us seasoned pros. However, I would challenge those readers to have open minds. Regardless of experience, there is always room for improvement. Premiere athletes at the very top of their game still train for hours a day—striving to be even better. Why should professional DJs be any different? ■

In an attempt to practice what I preach, I would be interested in hearing your comments. Please feel free to get in touch at jhumphrey@mobilebeat.com.



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Don't Believe Everything You Hear!

By Larry Williams



It is not all that uncommon for customers to focus on the smallest details of our performances, and their reports to friends or family end up being inaccurate, neglecting the “rest of the story.”

Getting the whole story is important for a correct assessment of DJ performance

DJs are accustomed to having many aspects of their performances scrutinized by people in their audiences. But how would you feel if some of the more negative opinions that you felt were without merit were to be shared with other people? Would you somehow feel robbed because they held you accountable for something that was not within your control? These days, it is not all that uncommon for customers to focus on the smallest details of our performances, and their reports to friends or family end up being inaccurate, neglecting the “rest of the story.” Whether intentional or not, this “hearsay” could be detrimental to our reputation.

Coinsider the (Lack of) Evidence

Observers of DJs are sometimes unforgiving of perceived performance shortcomings. The key word here is “perceived.” How many times have you played great dance music that resulted in minimal participation on the dance floor? Have you ever performed a wedding reception that dragged because of circumstances beyond your control?

Recently, I made the acquaintance of another DJ with whom I had been familiar with for many years. The only thing I knew of him was a story about a particular corporate function that a friend of mine had attended. This friend had told me that the music was horrible and hardly anyone danced. This firsthand account was the only report about this DJ that I had ever heard. For years, my one and only impression of his talent had been less than favorable.

As I came to know this DJ and become friends with him, I finally felt comfortable enough to ask him if he remembered that particular corporate event that my friend had recalled. He quickly said yes and proceeded to describe the

terrible music that the customer insisted he play throughout the night.

This immediately caused me to reflect upon the unfavorable review I had heard of him years ago. This unsatisfactory testimonial had become the basis for my thinking very unfavorably of his talents for years. I allowed a single firsthand account to be my one and only perception of his talents. How incredibly unfair this was to him. I have learned now to take this sort of thing with a grain of salt.

Counter Measures

This got me thinking about how other things are perceived by our customers. A lull in a wedding reception can easily be mistaken by a guest as a deficiency in the DJ’s abilities. A similar negative perception arise from a DJ’s interaction with guests. (Too reserved? Too animated?) It’s likely that some of the lyrical content even in radio-edited music could be perceived as less-than-favorable by some audience members. Oftentimes our customers are unaware of the lack of playlist control given to us by the party host.

So what to do? How can we encourage a more positive opinion of our services even when things take place that are beyond our control? Well, for starters, we can become more acutely aware of other event professionals with whom we need to work more closely. Appropriate announcing techniques can also work to our benefit, in keeping our audience informed of the program/timeline and schedule of events. Constant communication with our contracted clients throughout an event will prove beneficial as well. This will not only assist our efforts with customer service, but will likely create a visual perception for audience members that we are “in touch” with the situation at hand.

Professional Perceptions

Hearsay, even in its most “innocent” forms, can be extremely misguided and damaging to a reputation. However, creative marketing efforts can prove to be beneficial in combating this sort of perception. Just as people become surprised to learn that our industry has national conventions and national DJ organizations... imagine the impact you can affect with other event

professionals if you were to discuss this matter of importance with them.

Recently, I had the opportunity to speak to a statewide wedding organization. I was amazed at the level of interest the moment I brought up the subject of “hearsay” and how one should not immediately judge a DJ based upon something that is perceived as not timely or outside the scope of something typical. The number of questions by banquet supervisors and other event professionals convinced me that they can be easily persuaded to look at a situation differently, knowing that we are cognizant and concerned about how our actions are perceived.

I now firmly believe that direct marketing, face-to-face addressing of this issue and the use of well-designed performance techniques can assist greatly in reducing the way a customer or other event professional may view any negative on-site application of our services.

We can never educate every single person on the merits, permissible authority and noble intentions of the services that they are witnessing. But by engaging in a concerted effort to not take everything we hear about other DJs at face value, and by purposefully educating our customers and business associates about how hearsay can be unfair to DJ reputations, we may be successful in at least minimizing the negative perceptions of particular moments that may be outside the scope of our control. ■



Larry Williams is the author of *Mind Your Own Business* (ProDJ Publishing), with a second edition due out this fall. His new “Changing Public Perception” audio series is available at www.djlarrywilliams.com. A nationally recognized seminar speaker, he serves as a chapter director for the American Disc Jockey Association and recently took on the position of Public Relations Consultant for the national organization. In 2006 he was awarded the ADJA’s Michael Butler Humanitarian Award.



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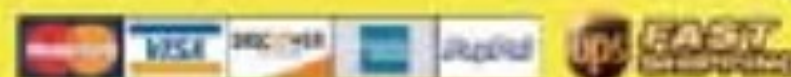
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Do You KICK?

By Paul Kida, The DJ Coach

In other words, does any aspect of your business life need shining up?

KICK stands for "Keep it Clean, Kiddo!" It might seem like just another cute acronym, but let's consider the power behind "keeping it clean." Keep what clean? Why? Does it really matter?

When you think of clean, what comes to your mind? What comes to my mind is sparkling, like a brilliant diamond, or fresh smells, and an overall feeling of just feeling good. Imagine starting every day with that kind of feeling. Your mind is functioning clearly, openly accepting a new day's work and ideas. You have a vibrant attitude as you speak to, meet and persuade new clients. You have an uncluttered, open mindset that allows you to focus on providing exceptional service, while personalizing your clients' events with new and exciting ideas.

Let's Get Physical

Let's start at the beginning (a good place to start!) and that is simply...yourself! What exactly do you want to keep clean? The answer is you, which means your body, dress and grooming, your mind and, just as importantly, your working environment.

First, it means your basic hygiene and clothing. It might sound ridiculous, but the basis of most of your success (and ability to book gigs) comes down to how other people, or clients, perceive you. Close your eyes for a moment and envision what you would consider a successful person would look like. No doubt most of us would be thinking of someone well-dressed, perhaps in a clean business suit, and most likely he/she would be clean shaven (if a guy!) and well-groomed.

Isn't that the perception that you want clients to have of you? Then you must make sure that you do all of the necessary things to present that image. Start with the small and most obvious things, such as bathing, shaving, combing your hair and brushing your teeth. You should also dress in a presentable manner. This has a positive effect on your entire outlook. You want to look

good and feel good about yourself. It will reflect in your attitude, confidence and demeanor. This is especially true if you are working from home, as many of us do. Don't fall into the trap of not shaving or working in your PJs. That doesn't mean you have to pull out the tuxedo and work in that, but just a nice casual dress shirt and clean, pressed pants should do. When you look good, you will feel good and it will show in your voice when you are making phone calls. You will work much more efficiently.

Cultivating Positive Consciousness

Let's move on to keeping a clean mental state and outlook. Since you are already feeling good because of your physical state, you are already on the right path. Keep that positive physical outlook growing and adjusting your mental outlook.

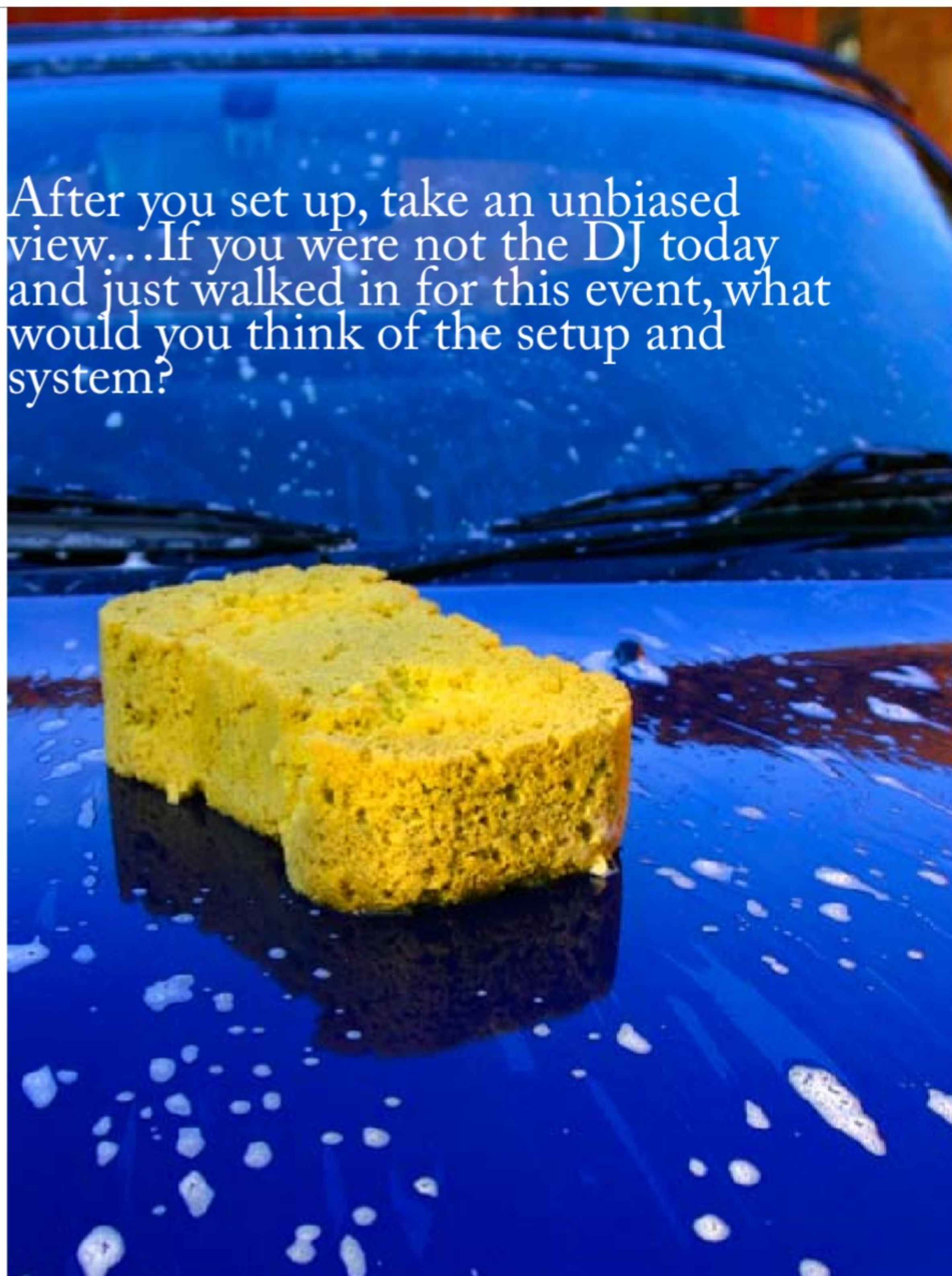
Make a daily mental checklist for yourself. How is your thinking today? Look for any possible negativity or complacency. These are things that are causing mental clutter, so get rid of them! Negativity can only do one thing if left

unchecked, and that is to bring you down and hold you back. Again, it will show in your voice on the telephone and, if that is what you give out, that is also what will return to you.

The same is true of complacency, or being satisfied with the status quo. You must clean out your mind by replacing negativity with good, positive thoughts. Adjust your thinking so it is constantly in line with your personal business vision. Don't let the dust settle, but strive to keep your thoughts bright, focused and moving forward.

Have you ever had a friend or family member that was constantly negative about everything, every day, no matter what the subject was? How long did you want to stay around that kind of person? I don't know about you, but my feeling is not very long! In fact, I would go out of my way to avoid them! If that is the impression that you give off to clients, how many jobs do you think you will book?

Instead, try a little positive affirmation each morning as a good way to get into a great



After you set up, take an unbiased view...If you were not the DJ today and just walked in for this event, what would you think of the setup and system?

mindset. After getting yourself ready in the morning, take a good look at yourself in the mirror and talk to yourself. Yes, I said talk to yourself! Tell yourself aloud that you will have a beautiful day, that you will be productive, and that you will treat other people even better than you wish to be treated yourself. Think of some specific positive things that you want to see accomplished during this day, and then repeat them to yourself, again out loud as if they had already been done successfully. It may seem very strange at first, but such positive vocal and visual affirmations will help keep your mind clean and focused. It will form the beginning of your day and help remove any negativity that might hinder your 100% success. Just try it. You'll like it!

Environmental Protection

Let's touch briefly on your working environment. One definition of clean is "uncluttered." Is your office space neat and uncluttered? Do you have papers, business cards and sticky notes scattered throughout? Do you have a daily schedule to make calls, follow up on arrangements, and keep appointments, or do you just jump into work and hope things work out?

Once again, get rid of the clutter! Keep it clean. This doesn't mean to throw everything out, but to have a place for it. Keeping a good filing system is an essential start. Write a list the day before of all the things that need to be done the next day, in order of importance, then cross them off the list as you complete them. Any papers that

you work with, such as lead sheets, phone call records, vendor references, etc. can be separated and filed in any system that works well for you. Personally, I keep a three-ring binder along with a yearly calendar. I divide my lead sheets into those I need to call (or new leads), those I have spoken to and will follow up on, and those to whom I have sent my marketing package. The calendar allows me to note any special calls I need to make on any specific day. By having everything in one book, it eliminates the pile of loose papers that used to drive my wife crazy. It also keeps things from getting lost, so that if someone calls you back, you know exactly where to find their information. It makes you look (and feel) much more professional and on top of things. Others may be more comfortable with a computer/electronic organizer-based system. Whatever you decide, just find a system that works well for you and that you personally feel comfortable with.

As far as your on-site work environment, ask yourself: "Do I have cords, wires, CDs, etc. hanging out all over the place?" "Is my attire appropriate for this event, and is it clean, neat and clean?" "Is my shirt clean, pressed and my tuxedo in good repair?" After you set up for an event, stand back and try to take an unbiased view your area. If you were not the DJ today and just walked in for this event, what would you think of the setup and system? As mentioned earlier in this article, you want others to perceive you as the consummate professional. Remember, perception IS reality.

Clearing the Air

I will end with a quick note about keeping performances clean. Without preaching morality, I simply suggest you keep in mind that even though your client may give you great leeway in kinds of music you can play, you'll still want to check out the lyrics to see if they are appropriate for your audience and the kind of event you are playing. Only each individual or company can set their own boundaries as to the content of the songs they play. I have found that by keeping this part of my performance clean and in good taste, I have gained respect and return business from my clients and their guests, and, just as importantly, I can respect myself for having clear standards.

So, do you KICK? When you Keep It Clean Kiddo you will do nothing but benefit in your personal life, your business, and your performance. You will look, feel and act like the excellent professional that you know you are. You will stand out as a brilliant, shiny diamond, heads above your competition. You will have clients that are saying, "Wow, I am so glad that I hired you. You are awesome! By the way, do you have any business cards?"

Please send any comments on this article, suggestions for future articles or questions to djcoach@mobilebeat.com.

Paul Kida, The DJ Coach, is a founding member and the current president of the Colorado Disc Jockey Association. He owns JAMMCATTS DJ Entertainment (www.jammcattdj.com), and is a regular speaker at the Mobile Beat DJ Show.

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By Stu Chisholm

A DJ learns the requirements and rewards that are part of youth event entertainment

Best Audience



Some years back, I got a call from a parent charged with putting together a “Daddy-Daughter Dance” for a local Catholic elementary school. While she was a bit shocked by my price quote, she and her committee liked some of the other details we had discussed and decided to hire me anyway.

We discussed the details carefully, since the music had to be geared toward the K thru 6th-grade audience as well as the sensibilities of the parish.

Positive Party Experience

I walked into the gig with a sense of trepidation, since the theme that the parents chose was a ‘50s & ‘60s Sock Hop, yet I began to think things might not be so bad when I saw the kids arriving wearing authentic looking poodle skirts (no doubt from grandma’s trunk), tight jeans and peace signs followed by their dads wearing leather jackets and slicked-back, “ducktail” and pompadour haircuts. Getting into the spirit of things, my assistant and I presided over a Twist

a button making kit, and this turned out to be a solution to a problem that hadn’t happened yet.

Rolling with the Moment

Later in the evening, we needed to get six volunteers for a routine the parents and I had planned. I asked my assistant how many buttons we’d handed out so far. “Six.” What luck! I announced that everyone who got a “Dance Pro” button to step forward. The kids were delighted! The parents of the committee were SO impressed that I didn’t have the heart to admit to them that we hadn’t planned or rehearsed that part.

After that party, we’ve been called back twice a year ever since, and it has led to many other events. That first dance turned out to be a stroke of luck, as we really didn’t have to worry all that much about the music. Apart from the themed events, a DJ who doesn’t have kids of his or her own has some homework to do...

Music to My Ears

When it comes to music, you really have two audiences: kids AND their parents. If you want

Practical Matters

Having an audience eager to participate means having things to do! Be sure that your games and routines involve as many of the kids as possible. If there are going to be contests and prizes, I try to make sure that nobody goes home without something in-hand. Buttons are inexpensive, and you can buy a starter kit to make ‘em yourself for about thirty bucks. T-shirts are pricey but always popular. I save these for the BIG contests. I also keep a box of giveaway CDs on-hand as well. All have my advertising on them, so each one is truly a “promotional” item.

Keep all routines simple. The old stand-bys can be pumped-up a bit. I use the Sesame Street version of the Hokey Pokey. The youngest kids love it and the older 5th and 6th graders still like it enough to dance.

Whatever you do, keep in mind that safety is #1. If something is possible, it usually happens in a room full of kids! Make sure that all cords are taped down or covered with rubber mats, and that speaker and lighting stands are not in any walkways. It’s also a good idea just to keep an eye peeled for things that are beyond your show. One of my dances was in a school gym where the bleachers had been retracted. Even though there were chairs everywhere, some kids insisted on climbing up to the top of the bleacher stack, so we would help the parents and chaperones help them off. It’s best to go that extra mile where the safety of kids is concerned.

So in summary, here are some of the Do’s and Don’ts for youth events:

4 DOs

1. Work with parents and listen carefully.
2. Listen just as carefully to the children!
3. Have plenty of activities for kids to do.
4. Bring lots of “free stuff” (giveaway items.).
5. Familiarize yourself with Radio Disney.

4 DON'Ts

1. Play offensive or adult music content.
2. Ignore or overlook anyone. Make every kid think they’re special.
3. Skimp where safety is concerned. Kids attract “Murphy’s law.”
4. Turn down kid’s parties! You will never have a more cooperative audience! ■

Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ in suburban Detroit. He has also done some radio, commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector since the age of seven.

I walked into the gig with a sense of trepidation...to my surprise and delight, the kids were totally into it.

contest, passed out hula hoops for a spirited competition and even broke out the limbo poles, running separate lines for different age groups. To my surprise and delight, the kids were totally into it. Whenever I’d ask for their attention and ask them to do something (“Let’s form a big circle in the middle of the dance floor!”), they’d be right there in an instant.

Most of my previous experience had been with high school dances and most DJs know that “I’m too cool to dance” look all too well, not to mention the constant vigilance for brewing fights or “freak dancing.” There was none of that at this dance—a refreshing difference!

It was a learning experience, though, and the first thing I learned was that younger kids would rather run around in circles than just dance, or their dancing tends to last for about 20 seconds—the length of their attention span. This problem was solved by having a nice big box of “free stuff.” I made an announcement: “If I or my assistant see some great dance moves, I’ll come right out and lay some free goodies on ya!” So they’d all dance their hearts out during the “in-between” times when no activities were happening and, as promised, we’d make a big show of them coming out and put a “Dance Pro” button on them. I make these myself with

to be called back, you don’t have the option of pleasing one over the other. Having radio edits is essential! Even when the songs are cleaned-up, you also have to pay attention to content. My rules are simple: if there is drug, overtly sexual or violent content, I don’t play it. Be aware, too, that kids will sometimes sing along with some songs, so, although you may have a radio edit, if there is a certain word in the original version, you might want to avoid that song. Parents can’t tell that your version was edited with the kids singing at the top of their lungs!

Being a non-parent, I’ve had to quickly find out what the elementary school crowd was listening to. Most parents know what their kids listen to, and are happy to give you suggestions. I lucked out with a whole committee full of parents willing to make me some lists. I also discovered a new radio format commonly referred to as “kid bop” (not to be confused with the CD series of the same name), basically embodied by Radio Disney. Their website’s Top 30 Countdown is a virtual shopping list! You’re going to need to know about Hannah Montana (daughter of Billy Ray Cyrus), the Jonas Brothers, the Cheetah Girls and Disney’s High School Musical. You’ll also see stand-bys like the “Cha Cha Slide,” “Who Let the Dogs Out” and the Hamsterdance.

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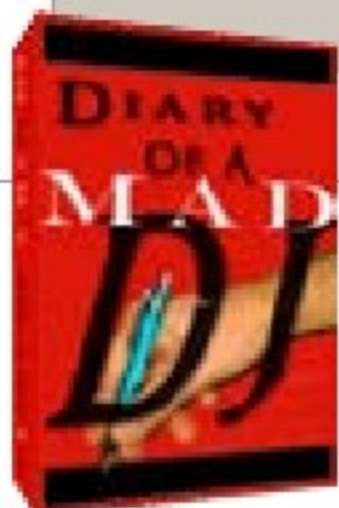
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Saturday, May 12, 2007
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Little Monsters

By Raymardo

**Dear Diary,
There was one of them.
Then there were two.
Then three.**

Multiplying like an evil science experiment gone awry, the creatures scurried on the floor in dizzying circles like miniature tornadoes. Back and forth they disappeared and re-emerged from under the tables, screaming in high pitched shrieks and I cringed under the verbal barrage.

Would I survive the four hours?

As if spikes were driven through the soles of my shoes, my feet affixed themselves to the carpeting, and while I stared frozen in disbelief at the nightmarish sight unravelling before me, I thought to myself This is not what I signed up for. Why are...

I was pulled from my internal thoughts by one of the creature's parents who approached my DJ area and asked, "Can't you do something with the kids? Can you play a game with them or something?"

According to Dictionary.com and Webster's Unabridged dictionary, there is no reference to children in the definitions attached to DJ or disc jockey. However, the term "babysitter" seemed to cover the responsibility I had somewhat unwittingly taken on.

I recall clearly how my parents ensured that I behaved when they took me out as a child. Never did they allow me to run amuck or pawn me off as someone else's responsibility.

Question:

What makes people think that babysitting their children at a private affair is the job of the DJ?

My response to the confused parent who wanted me to play a game with his kid was, "Where are their parents?"

"They're here. We're here," He responded. "Do you do stuff with the kids?"

"I'm the DJ. I play music. I can play a song for them."

"And you dance with them?" He was persistent.

So was I.

"I was hired to DJ. A dancer or their parents should dance with them."

Now don't get me wrong, I've DJ'd many school dances, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, and communion parties where I was hired to interactively entertain the kids. But, for my service, entertaining children is an upgrade, not part of a basic package.

When I bought my cell phone, text messaging wasn't part of the basic package. I'm sure you had to pay extra like I did to get that feature. It's an upgrade, and so is playing Coke & Pepsi, Mummy Wrap, Trivia Challenge and all the other activities that keep kids entertained so their parents can have an hour or more off without worrying about their little monsters.

If you are charging little or nothing extra to babysit kids at your gigs, you are selling yourself short and bringing down the prices that should be charged for these challenging parties that require more work.

Another Question:

Would you bring kids to the movies, let them run around the theatre, and ask the usher, "Don't you do stuff with the kids?" I doubt it. It's not his or her job. And it's not your job either—unless you are being paid for it.

You should always make your clients aware that you offer packages that include interactivity with children, and that it is not included in a basic package. If there are going to be children at a wedding and you are expected to keep them from running in circles on the dancefloor, I've got two words for you...

Charge More.

You need to make this even clearer when a client calls to book a communion party. Many DJs actually charge less for communions and work twice as hard to entertain the kids. I never understood that logic.

I've always charged top dollar for communions that require me to play with the kids. Initially clients are surprised by the price quote, but once they are made aware of all the extra work involved—games, props, prizes, running around—they understand.

Kids parties are even more challenging than weddings. Aren't they?

I'm sure most of you can do a wedding in your sleep. Then why do most DJs charge much more for weddings than for kid's parties? The answer is because a long time ago some foolish DJ decided to charge less and people just followed suit. Well, that DJ is probably long gone and he probably retired broke due to his poor logic. It's time for a change.

Think of yourself as a professional. As a DJ, you handle the biggest days of people's lives. You deserve top dollar for your services.

My sister owns Lisa's Touch Hair Salon, and

I'm sure most of you can do a wedding in your sleep. Then why do most DJs charge much more for weddings than for kid's parties?



if a client came in for a haircut and while in the chair asked, "Don't you do something for grey hair?" I guarantee you those grays wouldn't get colored under the cost of a basic haircut. Lisa would sell that lady a coloring treatment.

Be like Lisa.

Don't allow yourself to be roped into providing services that weren't paid for. If parents want their kids babysat, they should have hired a babysitter...or paid you more.

If you don't believe me and you need an example, email me. I'll take you to Lisa's Touch. If you can get her to color your hair for the cost of a haircut, I'll babysit your kids...for free. ■

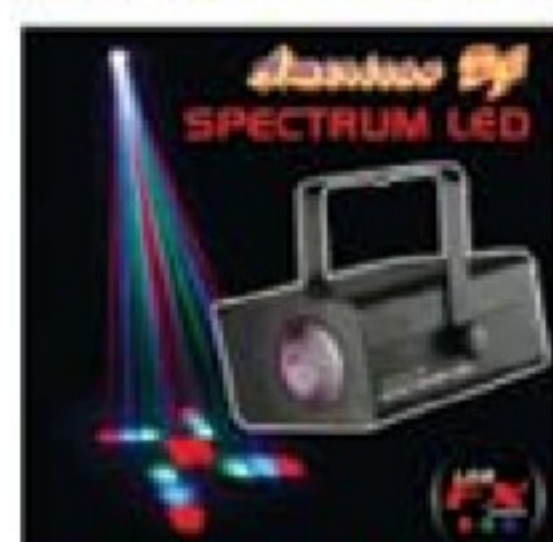


If you have a particular incident or story you'd like to share that involves people treating you as a DJ - differently or strange - email it to me at raymardo@raymardo.com with "Diary Of A Mad DJ" in the subject.

Raymond A. Mardo III (Raymardo) has been in the entertainment field nearly his entire life. As a rookie, he earned awards at top east coast DJ companies where he also provided training. Mardo then published *Making Money as a Mobile Entertainer* which was featured in magazines like *Entrepreneur*, which listed his LGR Entertainment in their top 500 businesses in the nation. Under the name "Natural Attraction," Raymardo released "Get Stupid" on *Radikal/Popular Records* in 15 countries. He now spends his time running online ventures, in film production, and writing.



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Summer Gear Sightings

InfoComm 2007

For many professional mobile DJs the line between their performance and high-tech multimedia presentations has been completely blurred. With that in mind, Mobile Beat visited InfoComm 2007, a trade show centered around multimedia, to get an idea of what's now and what's next.

If one word could sum up the entire show, it would be "brightness." Projector and screen manufacturers were there to show off how much better their products perform, even with a great deal of ambient light. Indeed the show floor was close to Vegas Casino brightness and yet from every anchor point screens and projectors beamed images that were as clear as they would have been in a very dark room just a few years ago.

If your thoughts on multimedia and audio visual are something along the order of "So what? This stuff doesn't apply to me," wait a second—it just might.

If you specialize in weddings, you have probably seen an increasing number of those "memory" digital image shows. Have you considered adding these to your repertoire? Or maybe just adding a projector and screen to your arsenal to offer for rent when couples have created their own slide shows?

Speaking of screens one of the most exciting things at InfoComm for mobile DJs was a new screen technology from ReversaUSA. The screens are made of a light-weight translucent plastic material, and the staff at the booth took considerable joy in kicking, throwing and bending the screens to demonstrate their sturdiness. Best of all, even when bent into interesting shapes, the images remained in focus. One of these screens will look good in front of my DJ console so I'm hoping to see them at the Mobile Beat DJ Conference next February.

A new study by Acclaro Growth Partners has determined audiovisual products and services comprise a \$25 billion industry in North America.

The AV Industry Market Definition and Strategy Study, conducted on behalf of InfoComm International, forecasts 11 percent growth in the audiovisual industry over the next two years.

If the corporate market is your realm, there is explosive growth in Audio Visual. From video conferencing to support for presentations created on a computer, this is a big part of the market and it's growing on a constant basis. How much? Digital signage has grown explosively over the past few years, with industry experts estimating a growth rate of 10 percent per month. More than one million digital signs are expected to be found in North America by 2009. The financial services, government, education, retail, healthcare and transportation sectors are implementing digital signage to deliver information, live and on-demand video and more to key audiences. Over the next three years, corporate officials estimate that 45% of corporate AV budgets will be spent on digital signage and videoconferencing goods and services.

That means they might be renting from you. The show floor of InfoComm was also full of a lot of wide-screen format screens and projectors. While the standard 4:3 was shown, the other thing that got vendors of projectors and screens excited was the wide screen format. Computers now are being manufactured with greater support of the 16:9 widescreen format and images designed for it are also getting popular.

There were also some unusual things on the floor, including a digital playback tool that played directly from digital media such as a Smart Digital card; also, technologies for creating Animatronic



fixtures such as the moving fixtures found at Disneyland theme parks.

Who knows—maybe a really creative multi-op could use some of these technologies to create an Animatronic DJ who is really good with projectors. Or maybe not. —Anthony B. Barthel

Summer NAMM 2007

Exhibitors and attendees were able to get some quality time together at the relaxed Summer NAMM music tradeshow in Austin, Texas, July 27-29. Although NAMM management reported an overall decrease in registrants from the 2006 summer trade show in Austin, business was still happening, and new products were still being revealed. The next winter installment of the NAMM Show will take place January 17-20, 2008, in Anaheim, California.

In the DJ realm, the variety of attractions you can always count on at NAMM's bigger winter version were not in evidence. However, some key manufacturers showed up with some exciting new gear.



American DJ focused on its ever-expanding line of LED lighting, including a host of color wash effects, moonflowers, UV lights, and accent lighting. The latest highlight was the new Revo family of moving LED effects, including the Revo Scan LED and the Revo Roll LED. These units help break LED technology out of the static realm and into the arena of moving light shows.

Also at the American DJ Group of Companies booth, American Audio revealed its latest innovation, the Q-FXSD Mixer. This 4-channel unit combines an SD (Secure Digital) card reader with the latest mixer technology, with the result being an truly all-in-one solution for DJ music playback. The current limit on SD size is 4GB, so you could take many gigs-worth (the performing kind) of music with you on one postage-stamp-sized card. (And SD capacity continues expanding.) Simply plug it into your mixer and you're good to go. (Personally, after Audio Sales Manager Tom Freret showed me this baby, I had the strongest feeling yet that CD players are

Continued on page 80

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Who's Reading Mobile Beat?

>> Johnathan Coachman (aka. The Coach) from the WWE was seen with the MB's recent wedding issue...at his own wedding. The event, performed by Tommy Carlucci with support from MB's Jake Feldman, brought out many stars from the colorful world of professional wrestling. A special shout out to David Kriener from The Source for Music for the hookup.



<< Rob Van Winkle—better known as Vanilla Ice—was in Des Moines, Iowa, the homebase of ProDJ Publishing, for a concert. He was caught here with Mobile Beat's Publisher, Ryan Burger, reading his issue of Mobile Beat before he went on to rock the mic like vandal.

A Different Spin by Jason Nocera

www.nichecartoons.com



Continued from page 8

Group marketing efforts. Jim will be transitioning from Stanton and Cerwin Vega sales into a role as marketing specialist for all three Stanton Group brands. With this appointment Jim's primary focus will be managing events, training, and marketing logistics, group wide. "I am extremely excited about the addition of Jim to our marketing department; I believe the combination of his industry knowledge and marketing savvy will make him a valuable asset to our team," explains Rick Richardson, Director of Marketing Communications for The Stanton Group. For more information about The Stanton Group, go to www.stantongroup.ws.

D-BASE OF D BEST

TalentDatabase.com has unveiled the creative industry's new comprehensive talent search engine and artist directory. The free web-based registry is similar to a global Yellow Pages designed to connect the creative class with enthusiasts around the world. The database takes the guesswork out of where to find top talent and industry contacts on the web, and creates a searchable listing that allows users to sort through artists profiles spread across twenty diverse talent categories.

The database also serves as an industry news source that pre-filters headlines, editorials and announcements by genre and relevance, and creates automated newsfeeds that artists can monitor according to their interests. This feature allows users to stay on top of breaking news and ahead of the trends affecting the industry.

In an effort to create a non-biased system for ranking the popularity of artists and other talented individuals, database developers have designed a proprietary system analytic feature called POPfactor™, which ranks artist profiles using a formula based on community feedback and other responsive metrics. This "auto-generated popularity ranking system" determines which artists deserve a higher position in search queries of the database. Artists can increase their exposure by uploading their portfolios and using the various networking and socialization features built into the site.

The database was founded by Orlando entrepreneurial artist Jimi Beach, who built a strong reputation on his ability to turn artistic concepts into successful businesses. "The TalentDatabase is designed for those who are serious about promoting their skills and ability. The intent was to develop a system that promotes the best talent on the web, in the hope of inspiring more people to pursue full time careers in the creative industries. By staying ahead of the trends, reading newsfeeds, and networking with others in the database, creatives can increase their exposure...and through community acknowledgments, climb their way to the top of the lists where the world is awaiting," states Beach. "The TalentDatabase is a new opportunity to promote the undiscovered talents of millions, and to encourage the world's consumers to support the artists who deserve it the most." ■

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Big Storm from Compact Unit

Designed for a smaller profile, the **T-1500 mini** from **Snowmasters** is a 16" fan-based **snow machine**—a smaller sister to the T-1500 full size with its 20" fan. It can move snow 3000 CFM with a variable speed control up to 2700 rpm, sending snow up to 50 feet into the air. This machine is a radical new evaporative snow machine that can be used at ground level as well as hung from a truss. Snowmasters claims that it offers the driest snow on the market. Also included are onboard DMX capability and a built-in repeat cycle timer. - www.snowmasters.com

Continued from page 76

Wireless Light

Lightronics now offers two **Wireless Lighting in a Box Systems**. The first offers a Lightronics TL-5024DMX Wireless console and a new Lightronics XC-42 Wireless dimmer along with the standard pieces (PARs, lamps, gels and stand). The second package is a 4-channel add-on system which also offers your standard pieces along with one XC-42 Wireless dimmer. The wireless option has an inside range of 1,400 feet and an outside range of 4,000 feet, with the capability of going through structures. - www.lightronics.com

More Wireless Choices

The **AKG WMS 450 wireless system** is now available with new AKG microphones C5, D5 and C555 MicroMic, providing outstanding gain before feedback. The WMS 450 offers easy operation with Auto Setup of up to 12 channels per frequency band and a Programmable Status Display with two-color backlight. The complete WMS 450 wireless system consists of the SR 450 stationary receiver, HT 450 handheld transmitter and the PT 450 pocket transmitter. Featuring a rugged finish metal case, the SR 450 provides the widest frequency range and highest S/N ratio in its class. The HT 450 handheld transmitter is available as a D5 dynamic microphone or C5 condenser microphone version, both providing maximum rejection against feedback and improved handling noise sensibility. The HT 450 also offers a spring steel elastic wire mesh cap for safe protection of the capsule element. Both the HT 450 and the PT 450 are easy to configure through optimized infrared data download from the receiver. They also feature a new hardwearing finish optimized for professional applications. Additionally, WMS 450 provides a patented battery status display with high accuracy, and with an operating time up to 8 hours on one AA battery, the WMS 450 offers end-users very low operating costs. - www.akg.com



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TELL IT TO MR. LUCKY!

Summer NAMM 2007

Continued from page 72

soon to go the way of cassette decks and reel-to-reels before them!)

Numark was in the house and loaded for bear with a range of new products for everyone from the working mobile DJ to the video performance artist to the podcaster to the pro studio engineer. Along with the continually updated D2 Director and the new DMC2 controller-CUE software combo (see Carl Ondraka's indepth review of the latter on page 54), other exciting products included: iDJ2 second-generation Mixing Station for iPods® and USB harddrives; the Total Control DJ software controller; the TTXUSB turntable with USB connectivity; and the NuVJ video performance controller (also reviewed in this issue, on page 60). Of interest to recording enthusiasts and DJs who add live performance to their shows was the unique MPK49 from Akai Professional, which combines MPC-style trigger pads with a MIDI keyboard controller for creating beats, recording and performing with pro audio software. And those of you familiar with the classic and standard SR-16 drum machine from Alesis will no doubt be interested in the new Control Pad. This percussion pad controller takes tried and true Alesis technology and expands the trigger surface to 8 large pads, which drummers or anyone who wants to easily trigger sounds on the fly will appreciate. Another Alesis innovation was the new iMultiMix 8 USB mixer, the first mixer to combine pro mixing inputs and controls with iPod recording. You can plug in an iPod and record to it or use it as a source of backing tracks to mix with live vocals or instruments. (To show that this is a trend, consumer computer accessory maker Belkin also showed a mixer/iPod recorder called TuneStudio. This was a 4-track model, aimed more at bedroom podcasters needing a basic unit.

Overall, the partnership of DJ powerhouse Numark with Alesis and Akai has brought about some amazing new products for DJs and other performers. The latest combination for making "beautiful music together" was also highlighted at the Numark booth, as MixMeister's Fusion software—essentially a sequencer for DJ sets—was demonstrated ably by Kari Sullivan (pictured).



Computer-centric digital DJing has taken hold, and the case companies have certainly taken notice. SKB showed off its newly expanded Gig Rig and also a line of water-tight, military standard cases. Their new Studio Flyer, designed for mobile recordists, but also perfect for digital DJs, was also on display (see E-Beat for more on this rolling case). Gator was meeting digital DJs' needs as well with sturdy laptop rack cases and a rolling laptop case with more utility pockets than you can shake a mouse at. At the Odyssey booth, I got a close look at the FZGS line of rack-cases featuring a smoothly gliding top platform for a laptop. These units are tailor-made for DJs who use a computer but also want to carry a traditional mixers and dual CDP as well. Odyssey also featured their LSTAND and LSTANDTRAY to help you add a laptop to any existing slant rack system.

IN the sound reinforcement area, there wasn't too much new to see, at least in terms of basic speakers and amps. But at the Peavey booth, you couldn't help but notice the large, new SP FH subwoofer, which utilizes an 18" Low Rider® Black Widow® loudspeaker with a 4" voice coil and Kevlar®-impregnated cone in a folded-horn design that is said to produce some earth-rumbling low end. More of a club and concert item, but I can see some crazy high school dance DJs taking these out. (Jake, you listening?) I was somewhat surprised to see another sub, not quite as hefty, but aimed more at mobility, coming from Nady. The SSW-15A provides a compact 15" woofer and can power two satellites.

Audio-Technica showed an updated Freeway 200 series wireless mic system, with a new space-saving power adapter and a new look. Shure also had its Performance Gear line in view. Sennheiser featured their growing evolution G2 wireless line. All of these represent efforts to make great wireless technology available at affordable price points. Other very affordable wireless options were on display by

Audio2000's, in the form of an expanded AW line of receivers and transmitters. Among these is a cool unit that charges handheld mics right on the receiver box. Related to the wireless world, a fresh idea came from CBI, who debuted their new Ultimate Shield cable. It is engineered to resist intense RF interference from radio stations or mobile

phones.

And every NAMM show provides at least a few off the wall, but often very cool surprises. In this case, I stumbled across a company called Hiptrix, which claims to make "the world's brightest glow-in-the-dark drumsticks." Obviously they were at NAMM to sell to dealers who sell to drummers. But I couldn't help but think a lot of DJs might have a lot of fun with a few pairs!

— Dan Walsh ■

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Who Said You Can Never Go Home?

A series of special events becomes an extended adventure



I believe it was the famous author Thomas Wolfe who coined the phrase, "You can never go home again." Well, it sure is nice to try sometimes. In 2005 an all-school reunion was being planned in my old hometown in north-central Montana. Since I now live in Oklahoma, the trip would be a vacation and not just a weekend adventure for me.

Prior to the event, I received the schedule of events for the weekend, and I saw a place where I might be to help out a bit. So, I sent an email to the committee offering to bring a very small DJ setup to play oldies tunes for the Sunday picnic in the park, since I'd be there anyway. They gladly accepted my offer.

A couple of weeks went by and then I received an email from a different community member about doing something for the kids that weekend. You see, in Montana—in the very small towns—about the only place to socialize is a bar. This small town of 900 people has four of them. I was informed that three of the four bars were having dances and would be full for the July 4th celebration and all-school reunion. The woman who sent the email was wondering if I could do something for the kids in town, while the adults were otherwise occupied. Specifically, the Explore America students were trying to raise money for a Washington, DC trip. They wanted to use a dance as a fundraiser and wanted to know what I would charge; I told her that I would just donate my time. After all, I was going to be there anyway.

I did the dance with no lighting, however one girl went home to retrieve a small rotating strobe with the colored lenses—you know, the kind kids have in their rooms. All went well, the kids had a great time, and I got the satisfaction of returning to my old multi-purpose room after 30-plus years.

As I was tearing down my abbreviated setup, one young man asked me, "Hey, man, would you do our prom?" Now being tired and in a hurry, trying to get to the bar before it closed, I said, "Sure, why not," knowing full well that the logistics of it just made it out of the question.

Always be careful what you say, as sometimes it can return to haunt you! Sunday's picnic in the park went very well, too. I caught up with old friends and played many oldies that they hadn't heard in years.

That was July; fast-forward to January. I was tending to normal daily life when I received another email that would change my world. The very nice woman introduced herself and then asked a question. "Do you remember the boy that asked you if you would do the prom? Well that's my son and we want you to come to do it for us."

My mind went into high gear, thinking of all the reasons why I couldn't, until I found out the date. It just happened to coincide with spring break and, since I work for a school, I was free. After negotiating the fees, the gig was set. I would certainly need help for this one, so my next task was to talk my 17-year-old son into spending his spring break with Dad. Not an easy feat but I pulled it off somehow.

Ah, the wonders of email! This time they were asking if I would be interested in doing an adult "prom" the night before the school prom. In actuality, it was a money-maker to guarantee funds to pay for the prom and my extended fees. Once again, price was in question and, once again, I said I would do it for the practice...since I was going to be there anyway. Do you sense a pattern here?

Our leisurely 1,400-mile drive was hindered a little by a day of springtime white-out conditions in Wyoming. But we came through with an extra day to hang, see old friends and just chill before the big weekend. We were going to need all the energy we could muster to do two shows back-to-back and head right back to Oklahoma. If only I had known...

After set-up for the prom on during the day, on Friday evening the adult guests came to the dance. Many of the 150 people that attended came just out of curiosity and to see what all the uproar in town had been about. No one had ever seen a video dance before, and they were in awe of my meager setup. If MY setup impressed them, they certainly didn't get out much (and it was pretty dark in there). I visited with many old friends that I hadn't seen in years, as well as my

high school science teacher. It turned out to be a special night for everyone, including myself.

Saturday's prom went off without a hitch. We received lots of accolades from the students and they all seemed to enjoy the large setup and video show. We were asked about returning the next year but I informed them that it would probably never work out again, due to my other employment situation.

We tore down our equipment, boxed everything up, and I went outside to get the vehicle. What a shock: I stepped out the door into a blizzard! It was snowing hard and visibility was very low. It was about 1:30 AM and the road trip home was not looking good. After we loaded, we spent the night with a good friend. We awoke at sunrise to more snow, but we knew we had to leave.

We headed out again into white-out conditions, knowing it was only 1,400 miles home. Those of you who have never experienced a white-out are very lucky. It's a condition when it is snowing and the wind is blowing, and you can't tell where the road ends and the ditch begins—very hazardous driving conditions indeed. We finally made it to the Oklahoma Panhandle three days later, driving with bad roads and snow the entire way.

Looking back over the experience, I would probably not have taken the job. Many people in this business might call me foolish for even attempting such a project and would probably say I didn't charge enough for the job. I have found that sometimes it's not about money or finely tuned details, but more about doing something fun and spontaneous. It's also about giving back, making a special memory. This was truly a once-in-a-lifetime, unforgettable event for me, my son, the students and the people of that sleepy little Montana town. I just hope that everyone there got as much out of it as I did. Maybe "You can never go home again," but I darn sure tried. ■

Eldon "Big E" Gragert
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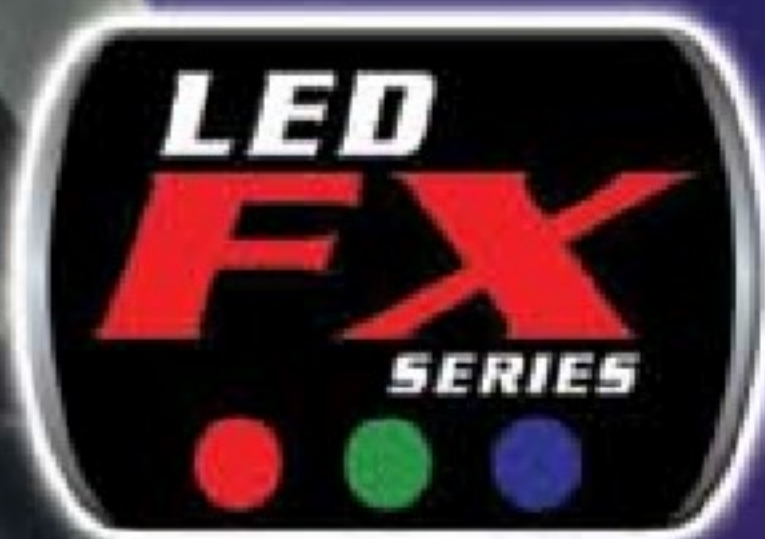
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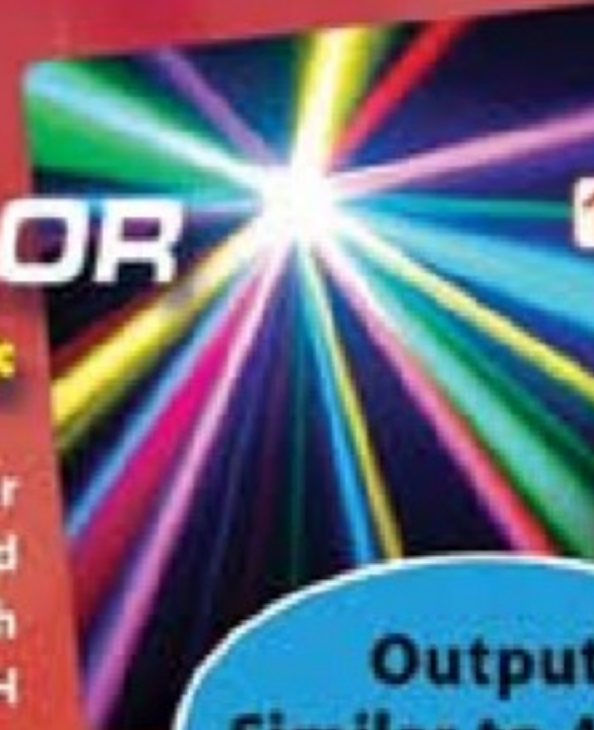
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